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THE TIMES

No. 64,501

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27 1992

45p

The Queen offers to pay tax on her personal income

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Queen is to start paying income tax on her private fortune and to finance Civil List payments to her children and sister. She will also pay council tax on her homes at Balmoral and Sandringham.

John Major made the announcement that the sovereign was relinquishing a 55-year-old exemption from tax liability during prime minister's questions in the House of Commons, many of whose members have been agitating for months for a reduction in monarchical privilege.

Buckingham Palace made clear last night that the initiative had come from the Queen herself, and had first been mooted last July. Demands for the royal family to be less of a burden on the taxpayer reached a peak in the wake of last week's Windsor Castle fire, when the government announced it would meet the full cost of restoring the building. But the monarch appears to have been several steps ahead of some of her backbench MPs.

The Palace said the Queen

instantly to ease the growing anxiety among Conservative MPs that the spate of bad publicity surrounding the royal family this year was in danger of spilling over into the government. He, too, made it clear that discussions had begun back in the summer, removing any suggestion that it was a hastily-conceived reaction to the Windsor fire.

"The Queen asked me to consider the basis on which she might voluntarily pay tax, and further suggested she might take responsibility for certain payments under the current Civil List arrangements. The Prince of Wales has made a similar request with regard to the Duchy of Cornwall," Mr Major said.

Downing Street confirmed that the initial approach had been made by the Queen in July, when Palace, Treasury and Inland Revenue officials began work on the proposals. The Queen and the prime minister discussed the idea further during Mr Major's visit to Balmoral in September.

They appear to have agreed the final details of the announcement during the regular weekly audience on Tuesday evening. John Smith, the Opposition leader, was briefed by Mr Major the next day on confidential Privy Council terms. The prime minister said he planned to make a more detailed statement in the new year.

Under arrangements expected to be in place at the start of the new tax year next April, the Queen will pay about £870,000 a year for the Civil List allowances of the Princess Royal, the Duke of York, Prince Edward, Princess Margaret and Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester.

The taxpayer will continue to fund the working expenses of the Queen herself, the Duke of Edinburgh, and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, which now total £9 million a year. The Queen already refunds the Civil List costs — about £630,000 — of the dukes of Gloucester and Kent and of Princess Alexandra.

In common with all her subjects, the Queen will also open her bank accounts to the Inland Revenue and the Treasury, who will face the byzantine task of deciding to which allowances she might be entitled. Her £3 million annual income from the Duchy of Lancaster, largely used to subsidise her public duties, will be subject to scrutiny, as will her wholly private holdings of stocks, land and property, including her homes at Sandringham and Balmoral.

Almost nothing is known of the Queen's private finances, protected as they are by law from examination at Companies House or through any other channels. At a Commons select committee in 1971 Lord Cobbold, then the



1992: the Queen relinquishes a 55-year tax exemption. Her decision may defuse the furor over who should pay for the Windsor blaze

1937: George VI does a tax exemption deal with No 10

Lord Chamberlain said that reports of a £50 million fortune were "wildly exaggerated".

Since then, the Queen has been obliged to dig deeply into both capital and income to keep her show on the road. Best estimates suggest that her private wealth is now something over £30 million, and that if it yielded a 10 per cent return which were taxed at the higher rate of 40 per cent, it would produce about £1.2 million a year for the Inland

Revenue. Downing Street confirmed unofficially last night that an estimate of well under £50 million was not far out.

Tax liability notwithstanding, the Queen's money is likely to remain a closely guarded secret. The Palace

Continued on page 3, col 6

De Klerk goes for 1994 poll

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN
IN PRETORIA

George III's gift, and Peter Riddell, page 3
John Grigg, page 16
Leading article and letters, page 17

UK aims to cut Delors budget

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

PRESIDENT de Klerk signalled a new era in South African politics last night with a commitment to a multi-racial government by the middle of 1994 functioning under a new transitional constitution which will provide for an elected parliament and executive.

"We urge all political parties to co-operate ... our ability to meet these target dates will depend on the co-operation of the other major parties," he said.

But the new proposals were swiftly attacked by the African National Congress. "South Africa cannot afford any delay in the process," the ANC said in a statement.

"The economy cannot sustain a further year of political deadlock and mismanagement."

Mr de Klerk said that, preparatory to the forthcoming political campaign, the European Commission and the EC states had agreed to support the French argument against last week's farm subsidy deal between the EC and America.

If Belgium and Spain swing behind France, this could be sufficient to block the deal without the threatened French veto.

Lamont bank leak angers No 10

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DOWNTON Street was doing its best last night to shrug off the latest dent to the Chancellor's credibility as it was confirmed that Norman Lamont had failed to pay off an outstanding Access credit-card bill.

However, officials were evidently angry that details of Mr Lamont's personal finances had leaked from the National Westminster Bank in what appeared to be a serious breach of confidentiality.

Labour launched an investigation to find out who had leaked the details.

Amid obvious gibes about

Mr Lamont's ability to run the finances of the country, Downing Street maintained that the Chancellor had not received his latest bill because of building works at No 11

bench cannot get control of their own finances, let alone those of the country," he said. Downing Street said that Mr Lamont had made quite a good job at the latter. "The Chancellor is doing his bit to sort out the nation's finances. He kept to the planning total in the Autumn Statement."

Officials refused to confirm reports in *The Sun* newspaper that Mr Lamont had repeatedly broken his overdraft limit of £2,000, which this time he had exceeded by £470. However, it was alleged in the report that he had been sent five legal warnings from Access for failing to keep up

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Gatt deadline, page 11

Howard signals
£1,000 top
council
tax bills

By NICHOLAS WOOD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

COUNCIL tax bills of £1,000 per household for the most expensive properties in England were signposted yesterday by Michael Howard, the environment secretary, as the government made clear that it was giving town halls one last chance to make a system of local taxation work.

Delivering the last rites to the poll tax, which is replaced by the new property-based tax in April, Mr Howard underlined his determination to prevent another local government fiasco and to keep bills in check. He unveiled a £340 million transitional relief scheme that will hold down maximum losses under the new system to £3.50 a week for people living in the biggest houses, tapering to £1.75 a week for owners of the smallest properties.

Lord St John of Fawsley, a constitutional expert, said the move showed the Queen was "closely in touch with the interests and feelings of her people".

But Robert Maclennan, the Liberal Democrats' home affairs spokesman, said: "The Queen's decision ... to raise the issue of the finances of the monarchy raises wider questions ... The Civil List cannot be considered apart from the purposes to which it is put. What Britain needs is a modern monarchy with a modern constitution."

Alan Williams, Labour, who has campaigned for the changes, described the news as "an enormous victory for Parliament and for the taxpayer".

Dennis Skinner, Labour, said: "It is not how much the Queen pays, it is how much she will get away with ... When I first raised the matter about the Queen paying tax, it was greeted with derision in the Commons. Now they have seen the light..."

Tony Travis, page 16

Leading article, page 17

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As 40-year reign is celebrated, Her Majesty consents to contribute to nation's coffers



Members of the Colet Court boys' choir, from St Paul's preparatory school in Barnes, southwest London, provide a vocal accompaniment while helping to plant 40 trees in Hyde Park to mark the fortieth anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne. The Duke of Kent planted the first tree in a ceremony which also marked the start of National Tree Week, organised by the Tree Council, when thousands of groups of 40 trees will be planted throughout the country

How the Crown gave away income of £70m a year

By ALAN HAMILTON

HAD George III not surrendered most of the Crown lands to the government in 1760 in exchange for a salary known as the Civil List, the royal family would today have an annual income of more than £70 million. But the Crown Estate is traditionally given over to the Treasury at the beginning of each reign and the Exchequer pockets its proceeds.

Today the Civil List is not so much a salary as a tax-free allowance to enable the Queen and other members of her family to carry out their public duties. The money is intended to be working expenses and most is spent on staff salaries in the royal households.

The Queen's allowance also covers items such as maintenance of cars, running kitchens and cellars for official entertaining, laundry, flowers, garden parties, presents for other heads of state and the upkeep of the horses and carriages of the Royal Mews.

Three junior members of "the firm", the Dukes of Gloucester and Kent and Princess Alexandra, receive an allowance but their share is refunded to the Treasury by the Queen from her private income from the Duchy of Lancaster, one of the few remaining vestiges of Crown land that still accrue directly—and tax-free—to the monarch.

In more financially stable times the Civil List was fixed at the beginning of each reign, but in the inflationary 1970s the Queen had to go crown in hand to the then prime minister, Harold Wilson, and plead poverty. From 1975 the list was reviewed—and increased—on every Budget day. But in 1990 Margaret Thatcher arranged a ten-year deal on the grounds that it was more in keeping with the dignity of the crown and more practical for long-term financial planning.

The Queen	7,900,000
Duke of Edinburgh	359,000
Queen Mother	843,000
Princess Royal	200,000
Princess Margaret	219,000
Duke of York	249,000
Prince Edward	96,000
Princess Anne, Duchess of Gloucester	87,000
Duke of Gloucester	636,000*
Princess Alexandra	636,000*

* Rebated by the Queen

In return, the Palace promised cost savings of £5 million over the period and brought in Michael Peat, a partner in one of the City's leading accountancy firms, to the new post of director of finance and property services. At the same time responsibility for the occupied royal palaces was transferred from the environment department to the royal household with a separate budget of about £24 million a year.

Overall responsibility for the royal household's finances, and how much the government pays, rests with the three royal trustees: the prime minister, the Chancellor and Sir Sham Blawitt, Keeper of the Privy Purse and effectively the Queen's treasurer.

Many MPs now say that too many members of the family are benefiting from the Civil List and that it should be restricted to the Queen as monarch, the Duke of Edinburgh as consort and the Queen Mother as queen dowager, deserving of a decent pension.

There is an acceptance that in such a case, other members of the family would perform far fewer public duties. They could, however, continue with their various charity works if the charities were prepared to pay their expenses: the Princess Royal, for example, could continue as president of Save the Children, which already foots the bill for her visits to their work abroad.

An exception to the Civil List is the Prince of Wales, who funds the staff and public duties of himself and his wife entirely out of the annual profits, currently £2.5 million, of the Duchy of Cornwall and its 125,000 acres of farm and urban land. Before he married, the Prince paid half the

Queen's seven-year-old son, Prince William, £10,000 a year to help him through university. The Prince of Wales has been asked to contribute to the Queen's pension, but he has refused.

Recipients: the Dukes of Kent and Gloucester

At last you have something to do with your time

Queen's offer, page 1
Leading article, page 17

At last you have something to do with your time

Queen's offer, page 1
Leading article, page 17

How the taxman will waste no time

By LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

IF THE Queen decides to pay tax from April 6, her first tax return will not land on the doormat until a year later. But her income will drop immediately, according to David Rothenberg, a partner of the chartered accountants Blick Rothenberg.

"It is believed that she is a shareholder in a large number of quoted companies and that her dividends are paid gross. That would stop as soon as she started paying tax," he said.

From April 6 the Queen will have a personal tax allowance, at present £3,445. She will be able to earn that much without paying tax and will have the right to claim half the married couple's tax allowance of £1,720, without the Duke of Edinburgh's permission. If he agrees she can have the lot and earn £5,165 before paying tax.

Like all other taxpayers she will be allowed to make gains of up to £5,500 a year free of tax. Mr Rothenberg questions whether the Queen would

have whole share portfolio to reduce her tax liability. This is the process where investors sell their shares at the end of the tax year and then buy them back to give a new value for tax purposes.

The Queen's decision to pay taxes on her personal income and to reimburse the exchequer for civil list payments to five members of the royal family is a shrewd political move, but it is not a radical one. The concession is voluntary and does not alter the underlying structure of the royal finances or the ten-year agreement on the civil list announced in 1990. Moreover, in paying taxes, the Queen is following the practice of George V and Queen Victoria.

The limited nature of the changes is underlined by the way that the affair has been handled. It has been a classic establishment operation. The suggestion was first made by the Queen herself during the summer and was then discussed by a small group of officials in Buckingham Palace.

Her investments could also be subject to inheritance tax. She will have to dispose of her wealth seven years before her death to avoid this. Items of national heritage can be exempted but the public would

Palace coup shows classic signs of put-up job

By PETER RIDDELL, MONEY EDITOR

The timing of yesterday's announcement, ahead of completion of a detailed memorandum of understanding, was not a matter of chance but a response to the arguments of the past few days. John Smith, the Labour leader, was informed about the talks earlier in the week on the usual confidential privy councillor basis. He then raised the issue with Mr Major at prime minister's questions yesterday, in part to show that Labour agreed with what had been decided. It looked the put-up job that it was.

No one gains politically out of the affair, although Mr Major has handled it with delicacy, discretion and skill. Relations with the monarchy are very much a matter for the prime minister himself and, despite his other distractions, he has spent much time in discussions not just with the Queen and her advisers over her finances but also with other members of the royal family over handling the publicity about their personal lives.

To MPs and generally mentioned only by Labour mem-

bers. But yesterday's announcement will not, and should not, be the end of the matter.

The monarchy may now be more willing to expose itself to scrutiny but that does not mean we are about to move to a Scandinavian-style of royal family. The existing structure and conventions remain in place. There may be a big change in practice in the royal finances but there is no change of principle so far, though there was the suggestion in Whitehall yesterday of a more fundamental review when there is a change of monarch.

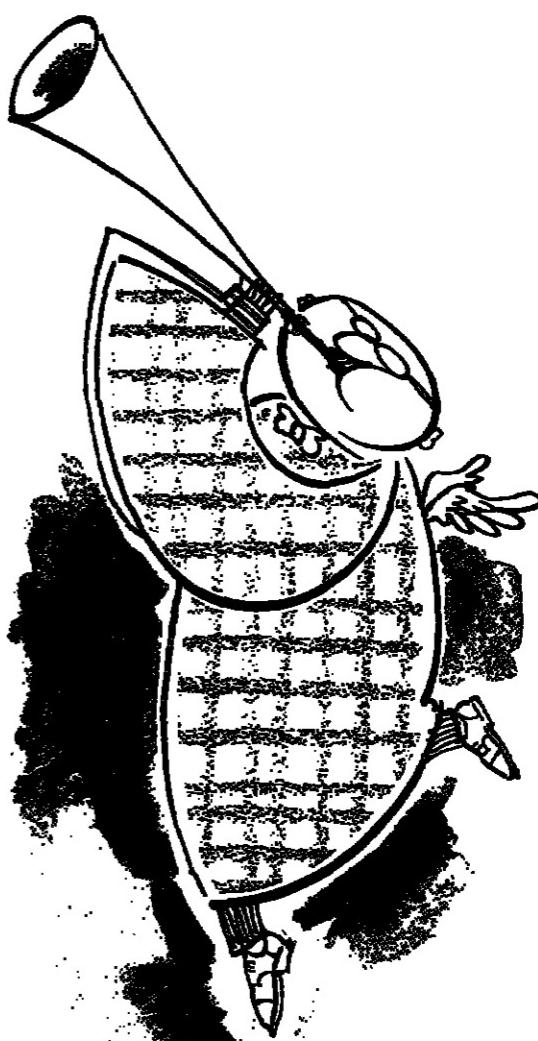
All but a small handful of republicans at Westminster agree that Britain should remain a monarchy and most remain with the Queen rather than the tableaux over recent events. But many more MPs, generally but not exclusively on the opposition benches, believe that the time is right for a review of the monarch's constitutional powers and prerogatives. The Queen and the prime minister yesterday bought time but they have not ended the debate.

PETER RIDDELL

ON THURSDAY

RD
3

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Next Thursday evening, in the pursuit of Christmas cheer, Simpson Piccadilly will be dishing up mulled wine, mince pies and yes indeed, carols from our very own Barber's shop quartet - The Simpsonians.

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Dialogue despite ordination of women

Vatican keeps door open for reunion

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A SENIOR Vatican figure says today that dialogue on reconciliation between the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches will continue, despite the decision by the Church of England to ordain women priests.

But Cardinal Edward Cassidy, president of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, also said that the decision to ordain women priests is perceived in Rome as a clear break with tradition.

The interview with Cardinal Cassidy, in the influential Catholic journal *The Tablet*, is the first lengthy comment from the Vatican on the Anglican decision. Immediately after the decision earlier this month, the Vatican issued a brief statement describing it as a "new and grave obstacle to reconciliation".

Cardinal Cassidy's interview will be welcomed by Anglo-Catholics who wish to remain within the Church of England but are concerned

that its decision puts it out of step with the rest of Catholic Christendom. It comes at a time when the list of women deacons who want to be ordained in the Church of England has reached 1,400.

Cardinal Cassidy supports statements made last week by the Right Rev Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, co-chairman of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, the body responsible for dialogue between the two churches.

Bishop Murphy-O'Connor, of Arundel and Brighton, said the Anglican decision was not a legitimate one according to Catholic tradition today. But he could not say how the development would be regarded by bishops in fifty or a hundred years' time.

It is considered significant that Cardinal Cassidy did not describe the decision as a total block to unity between the two churches. He said merely that it created an obstacle on the path to full communion be-

tween the Catholic Church and the Church of England.

He said this should not lead anyone to jump to conclusions. The purpose of dialogue was "to find a way — not around the obstacle — but to remove the obstacle".

Cardinal Cassidy said:

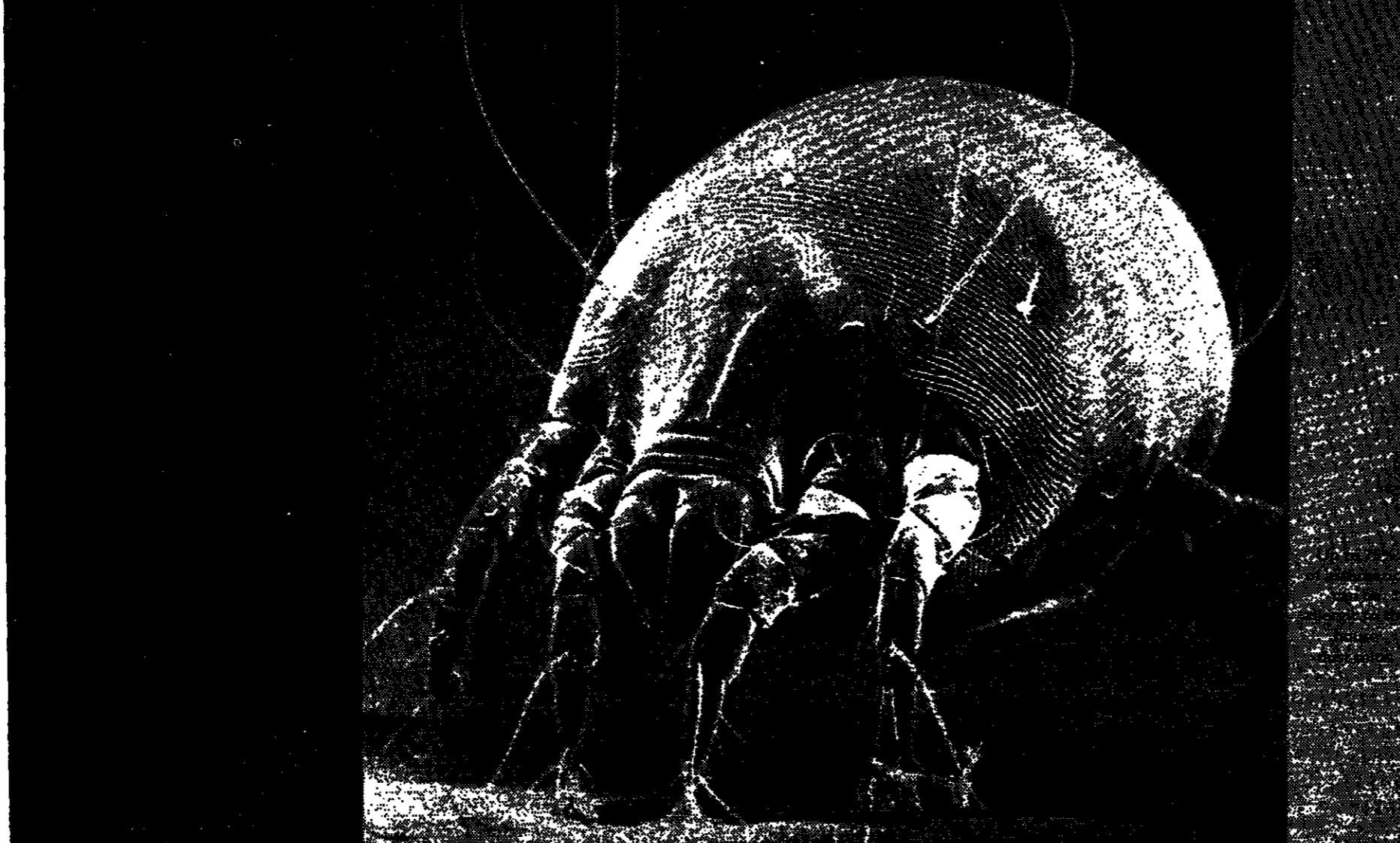
"When we enter into ecumenical dialogue, we take our faith as it is today. We bring our identity. But we also try to remain open to the Holy Spirit, who is working for the unity of Christians. It is not for us to tell the Holy Spirit what's to be done."

However, he did not believe the Holy Spirit was talking to the Christian churches through the Church of England. "We would reject that the Holy Spirit is talking to the church through this decision, because the Holy Spirit does not contradict himself. He has spoken to the church for almost 2,000 years in one way. It would be very strange if he spoke in a different way now."

Taking note: a model conferring with the London Symphony Brass Ensemble at Wednesday night's fashion gala at the Grosvenor Hotel



Children take the strangest things to bed.



Dinosaurs, conkers, trolls, not to mention the strangest of the lot; microscopic house dust mites.

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Moschino shares his fashion jests

BY IAIN R WEBB, FASHION EDITOR

DESPITE the downpour hair-dos stayed high as London's glitterati turned out in force to welcome Franco Moschino to London. The Italian "bad boy" designer delighted the audience with his first British fashion show which, as expected, provided more than just a chance to see the designer's new lines.

Moschino is a renowned joker: he has fun with clothes and has firmly ensured a place in fashion's hall of fame by asking his fans (of whom there are many) to buy an expensive jacket with "expensive jacket" picked out in gold across the back, or a dress with "waist of money" embroidered around its middle. His clothes sell well. In September the Moschino Couture boutique opened at Harvey Nichols in Knightsbridge, London.

Another first for Wednesday evening's charity gala show at the Grosvenor House Hotel on Park Lane was the musical accompaniment provided by the London Symphony Brass Ensemble, who joined with Moschino to raise money for the London Symphony Orchestra Endowment Trust. The fund was established in 1989 to provide finance for the development of the orchestra.

tra, and to help to pay for its community and education projects. The audience for the evening included Sting and his wife, Trudi, the designer Bruce Oldfield, Marie Helvin and Susan Sanger.

The show began with a stroll through the archives. Bemused diners looked up from their coffee to see models making their way between the tables before mounting the catwalk centred on the orchestra. First came a Regency-style ballgown, teamed with a leather motorcycle jacket and plimsolls; next a model carrying a kettle as a handbag, followed closely by another with a vertical take-off aircraft as a hat.

Moschino's takes on the accepted images of fashion are infamous, so his spring collection for 1993 was not surprising, taking Mary Quant's daisy-age Carnaby Street and turning it on its head and following that with deconstructed Chanel-type suits.

Moschino enjoys a joke. When he took the microphone to say, as he put it, "just two words", he followed with "Thank you" and "Very welcome". Moschino: always the comedian.

Epileptics cleared for TV games

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

PARENTS of epileptic children need not avoid buying them computer games because of the risk of a seizure, the British Epilepsy Association said yesterday. The association was responding to a decision by the leading games manufacturers Sega and Nintendo to include warnings with their games.

The fast-moving games, which can be played on television sets or hand-held consoles, involve guiding creatures such as Sonic the Hedgehog through exploding obstacles courses populated by maniacal opponents. The light patterns may induce epileptic seizures.

But the association said that only 5 per cent of epileptic children were photosensitive and susceptible to seizures triggered by flashing lights, televisions or the computer games.

"All children want these games and we think it is too small a problem to deny them," it said. "Children with epilepsy should be treated as far as possible like other children." One in 200 people have epilepsy and three quarters are diagnosed under the age of 20.

Computer games have the potential to cause a seizure in sensitive people because their flicker rate is low and they are designed for players sitting close to the screen. The association said that a family in South Wales had contacted it after their teenage daughter had a fit while playing a Nintendo game.

Her parents had not realised that computer games posed a risk and discovered a warning inside the packing only after her seizure was

£1,000 for garden sold in error

A woman whose garden was sold by a council to neighbours in a flat upstairs is to receive £1,000 compensation. Dorothy Patterson had earlier asked the council at Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, for permission to fence in land in front of her ground floor flat. Consent was given and she spent £400 on fencing, shrubs and plants.

When the occupants of the first floor flat applied to buy the home, North Tyneside Council sold them the garden too. The local authority ombudsman has ordered it to pay the compensation.

Mrs Patterson, 37, said yesterday: "I never started this action because of the cash. I had no legal access to the garden, even though I had spent all that money on it."

Boxer case

Peter Foster, 37, of Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, was remanded in custody charged with the attempted murder of the former British and European heavyweight boxing champion, John L Gardner, and with wounding his wife, at the pub managed by the couple.

Cell hanging

Andrew Blennack, 43, of Exeter, jailed in 1975 for the manslaughter of his mother-in-law, with whom he had had an affair, was found hanging in his cell at Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight.

Undaunted

A postmaster at Prestwich, Greater Manchester, lost his artificial leg during a scuffle with three armed raiders. They left him handcuffed but he managed to dial 999 with

Delay 'anthology pupils'

Delay over English anthology threatens pupils' exam results

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE government's examination advisers today issued details of next year's national curriculum tests for 14-year-olds without reaching agreement on the anthology that will form the basis of testing in English.

Schools will not receive copies of the 20-page anthology until February for testing early in June. The School Examinations and Assessment Council, which has issued a list of authors to be studied by lower-ability groups, argued yesterday that the delay was beneficial because it would prevent schools "teaching to the test". However, the anthology will be used for at least the next three years.

Agreement is still to be reached on authors and on the mix of modern and pre-20th century literature. Some Shakespeare will be included, as well as a short story, poetry and several extracts from novels.

Fourteen-year-olds of average ability and above will also be tested on three Shakespeare plays: *Julius Caesar*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or *Romeo and Juliet*. Others will have a selection of 30 books, which mix Kipling and Robert Louis Stevenson with more modern authors.

About 600,000 pupils in state schools will face almost 12 hours of tests over a fortnight. Many leading independent schools are threatening

■ Slow learners will be tested on Kipling next year, while other 14-year-olds must wait to hear which authors are required reading

ing to boycott the tests on the grounds that they are too simplistic and risk a return to old-fashioned learning methods.

Most tests will come in four parts of difficulty, designed to reduce the dangers of pupils sitting tests that are too easy or too difficult for them. They will use a range of techniques, from multiple choice to extended written answers.

In English, pupils face tests on reading and writing, an extended essay and set texts. The precise style of questions on grammar and vocabulary has also not been decided.

They will also do three one-hour mathematics tests covering numbers, algebra, shape and space, and handling data. There will be three one-hour science tests, and a combination of written and practical tests in technology. Class teachers will carry out their own assessments of pupils earlier in the term.

Teachers at each school will mark the papers with GCSE groups conducting an audit to ensure standards are consistent. History and geography tests will start in 1994.

□ Primary schools have taken to heart ministers' demands for a concentration on the

basics of the national curriculum, according to research published yesterday.

More than half of teaching time for five-to seven-year-olds is now devoted to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Warwick University researchers have found. As a result, subjects such as geography, history and religious education are being neglected.

At least a third of teachers are putting in the equivalent of 11-hour working days and the working week averages 52.4 hours.

The Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association, which commissioned the report, said that such a workload was "unreasonable and unsustainable in the long-run".



Living testament: Ester Brunstein, an Auschwitz survivor, launching the Anti-Nazi League pamphlet "Holocaust denial: the new Nazi lie" in London yesterday

Rape case doctor admitted affairs

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE wife of Dr Thomas Courtney, the Harley Street gynaecologist accused of rape and indecent assault, knew he had sex with other women during their marriage, an Old Bailey jury heard yesterday.

Dr Courtney said: "My husband is not the first person to have an affair and he is not the last." When she asked him, he had told her he had sexual intercourse with others. The couple have been married for six years.

The knowledge had annoyed her but had not made her feel threatened, she said. Her husband had always answered her questions honestly.

Dr Courtney's wife, an ophthalmologist, met him when they were students in Ireland. She said they had lived together before marrying.

She was giving evidence for the defence on the seventh day of her husband's trial. Dr Courtney, 46, from Cricklewood, north London, has denied raping two women and indecently assaulting two others at his surgery.

The prosecution alleges the two indecent assaults, involving the use of sex gadgets, occurred when he was inter-

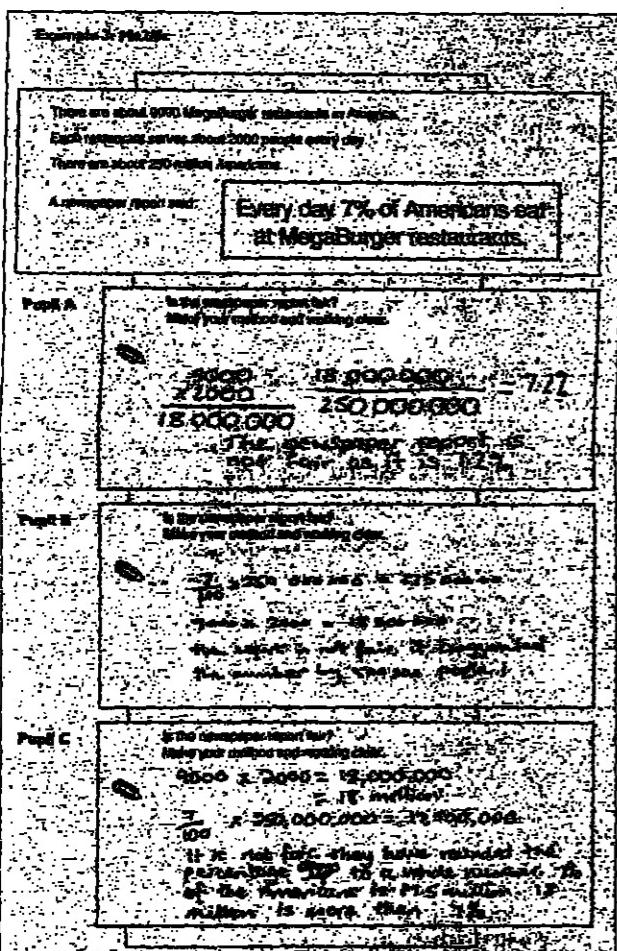
viewing women for jobs. Richard Horwell, for the prosecution, asked Dr Parul Courtney whether her husband had told her that when he interviewed people he would examine them and take his own clothes off.

She said Courtney had told her this. He had said he was going through the procedure and routine of his clinic.

She said her husband had told her he was going through the use of the equipment with the second potential employee — "and in the course they got carried away and had oral sex". She had been annoyed and told him it was foolish.

Anthony Arding QC, for the defence, invited the jury to take part in a wine tasting in court at the end of the evidence. After the cork was pulled with a loud pop, an usher carried 12 plastic glasses containing Gewurztraminer Alsace wine to the eight men and four women jurors.

The prosecution alleges that Courtney gave spiked wine to Miss B and then raped her. She said it had an unusual taste. The defence maintains that the type of wine has a distinct, spicy taste. The trial continues.



The three answers show correct calculations but do not consider the relative orders of magnitude. Pupil A notices only that 7 per cent and 7.2 per cent are unequal. Pupil B incorrectly states the difference in magnitude. Pupil C notes the rounding and the difference. Whether it is fair to round to 7 per cent in this context is not considered, so all three fail to attain the standard required.

Spy's family buried in Cumbria

By RONALD FAUX

THE final act in the mysterious life of Ian Spiro took place yesterday when his ashes were buried in a Cumbrian churchyard with the bodies of his wife and three children. The funeral at St Catherine's Church near Boot, where Gail Spiro grew up and the family once had a home, could not have been more removed from the violence and intrigue which has surrounded the family's deaths.

The spy's second wife, Gail, 41, and their children, Sara, 16, Adam, 14, and Deana, 7, were found murdered at their home in Rancho Santa Fe, California, three weeks ago. Three days later the body of Ian Spiro was found in his car in the desert a hundred miles away. The mystery behind their deaths is the subject of an international investigation, with reports that Mr Spiro had worked for western intelligence and had become caught up in the violent web of Middle Eastern politics.

At the simple burial service, a brief statement from the family's close relatives said they knew nothing of Ian Spiro's business dealings and were not involved in them in any way. They considered the funeral to be a private family matter, when they could mourn the deaths of five people, among them three beautiful children.

Sex bias case goes to Europe

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE European Court of Justice is to rule on whether an employer is guilty of sex discrimination if he dismisses a female worker who becomes pregnant shortly after being hired to cover for a colleague taking maternity leave.

Five law lords yesterday adjourned their judgment while they referred to Europe an appeal by Carol Nardin, of West Drayton, west London. Mrs Nardin was taken on by EMO Air Cargo (UK) as an import operations clerk in June 1987, replacing another clerk, Valerie Stewart, who was having a baby. She was dismissed two weeks into a six-month training period, after she suspected she was pregnant.

Yesterday Lord Keith of Kinkel, the senior law lord, said there could be no doubt that, in general, to dismiss a woman because she was pregnant was unlawful direct discrimination. However, in Mrs Nardin's case, it was expected non-availability during the period when she was needed to cover for Mrs Stewart "which was the critical factor". Lord Keith of Kinkel said it was necessary to take into account recent decisions of the European court concerning the interpretation of a directive on sex discrimination.

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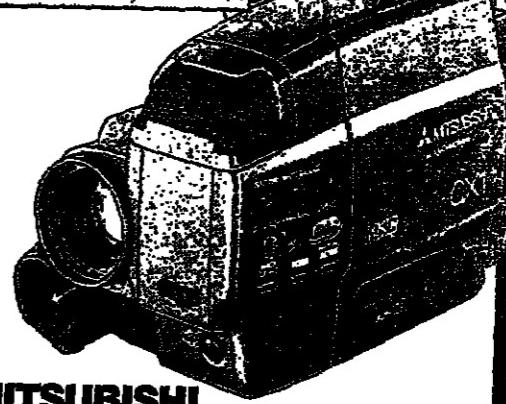
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Blueprint for survival promises to axe formula programmes and to emphasise 'pioneering output'

BBC pledges to plough its own furrow

BY MELINDA WITSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

■ The BBC's response to the government's green paper is to offer innovative programmes and increased accountability

THE BBC will no longer broadcast "imitative or formulaic" programmes provided by commercial television or radio. John Birt, its incoming director-general, said as he unveiled its blueprint for survival yesterday. He vowed that the corporation would challenge audiences with "pioneering output that reflected the diversity of British culture".

Two days after the government pledged that the BBC would continue to be funded by the licence fee, Mr Birt said that the corporation did not intend to withdraw voluntarily from any of its services except sub-standard programmes bought from the United States and Australia.

Speaking publicly for the first time since being named 16 months ago as Sir Michael Checkland's successor, Mr Birt refused to name any



Three wise men: John Birt, left, Marmaduke Hussey, centre, and Sir Michael Checkland launching the BBC's policy document yesterday

existing programmes that did not fit the new strategy, although some such as the Australian soap *Neighbours* clearly fall foul of the proviso banning acquired material.

Predicting that the BBC's share of the total audience will have dropped by 10 per cent to one-third of the population by the year 2000 with the proliferation of cable and satellite channels, Mr Birt said that the watchwords had to be distinctiveness and quality to justify the licence fee. "Otherwise the licence-payer will see no reason to pay anymore."

The corporation would be neither a cultural ghetto offering programmes only for élites and minorities, nor would it be drawn into battle for ratings with an ever-expanding number of commercial stations. "Rather it will be a broad-based BBC offering

something stimulating and satisfying for everyone, something special for every individual licence-payer," Mr Birt said.

The document, *Extending Choice*, also signals a shake-up of BBC Radio, promising more speech content on Radios 1 and 2 in an effort to differ-

entiate BBC services from the commercial sector. Top 40 hits on Radio 1 will be abolished to make way for more social action, youth, humour and drama programming, as well as live music and new work. The BBC pledges to make Radios 3 and 4 accessible to a wider range of listeners.

Launching the document with Sir Michael and Marmaduke Hussey, the BBC chairman, Mr Birt said that the corporation would become more open and accountable to its audience. It will publish its programme strategy and goals every year and review its performance annually. "We

will also offer effective remedies for complaint," Mr Birt said.

In line with recommendations contained in Tuesday's green paper, the BBC will institute and publicise a new complaints procedure telling viewers and listeners how to complain and clarifying how the BBC will provide redress.

It also pledged to separate the roles of management and governors to ensure that the governors can act as "trustees of the public interest" without the conflict of interest caused by participating in day-to-day management decisions.

The corporation will also be more responsive to audience demands, scheduling a series of nationwide public meetings in the coming months. People will also be able to pay the licence fee monthly.

The BBC aims to restore its

pre-eminence in drama and to re-establish itself as the "principal innovator and pioneer in comedy and light entertainment" with new formats, more sitcoms and 50-minute comedy-dramas.

It promises "a unique range of programmes for young people", an emphasis on live music coverage and the commissioning of new artistic work. "Educative" output will be extended. The BBC also promises to be the "guarantor of the national debate" with improved and extended news and current affairs coverage in peaktime.

Mr Hussey said that three things would be vital: efficiency, accountability and "a robust spirit of independence from political pressure and commercial interests".

Modern Times, page 15

Birt steps into the spotlight

JOHN BIRT, who had 16 months waiting in the wings, took centre stage at the BBC yesterday, a month before Sir Michael Checkland officially steps down as director-general. (Melinda Witstock writes)

Reiterating Lord Reith's old ethos that the corporation must entertain, inform and educate with distinctive and pioneering programmes, Mr Birt unveiled the BBC's vision of its future as Sir Michael, sitting on the platform between his successor and Marmaduke Hussey, the chairman, looked on.

Sir Michael said: "My role over the last year has been to put the BBC in a position where it could lead the debate for charter renewal by setting out an agreed and clear programming role for a single, coherent BBC committed to efficiency and accountability. In short, a BBC committed to quality and distinction, adaptation and change."

"It is now right for the incoming director-general, John Birt, to take over and win the arguments for the BBC in the coming months," Sir Michael said.

Both men insisted that they shared the same vision about the BBC's future despite continued speculation that yesterday's 88-page document meant different things to the two men.

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Spencer best man 'wept to police'

THE BEST man to the Princess of Wales's brother wept after reporting a £2 million armed jewellery raid to police, a jury was told yesterday.

Anne Donellan, a New York police officer, said that Darius Guppy, a jewel merchant, and Benedict Marsh, his business associate, had said that robbers burst into their hotel room, fired a shot and threatened to kill them before escaping with rubies, sapphires and emeralds.

She told Snaresbrook Crown Court, east London, that both men were sweating and appeared nervous and shocked when she and a fellow



Guppy: accused of insurance swindle

policewoman arrived at the hotel. Mr Guppy was "sitting on a chair by the TV with his hands on his face... when he looked up you could see tears in his eyes."

The court has been told that Mr Guppy, 28, of Ladbroke Grove, west London, and Mr Marsh, also 28, of Southwark, southeast London, staged the raid in New York in March 1990 as part of a £1.8 million insurance swindle.

Mr Guppy was best man at the wedding of Earl Spencer, the Princess of Wales's only brother.

The two deny conspiring to defraud Lloyd's of London and plotting to steal and commit false accounting.

Miss Donellan, 31, told Mr James Curtis, for the prosecution, that Mr Marsh said the robbers forced their way into the room after posing as room service. One pointed a gun at them and demanded the key to the safe. They were ordered into the bathroom, made to lie on the floor and tied around the hands and feet.

After the raiders left, Mr Guppy said he knocked a phone off the hook and dialled hotel security with his nose, Miss Donellan said.

The case continues today.

Historians may see atom bomb and secret service papers

BY ANDREW LYCETT

THE end of the Cold war and a spirit of glasnost in Whitehall have inspired British historians to press for the release of more documents under the government's 30-year rule.

Today the minister responsible for the civil service, William Waldegrave, will receive a document outlining what they want to see. At the moment historians are restricted by an inconsistent interpretation of the 30-year rule, which was reduced from 50 years in 1967. Many categories of historical documents are held back for up to 100 years and sometimes longer. There is a blanket ban on nuclear issues, intelligence and civil defence.

During the summer Mr Waldegrave called on "scrivous historians" to write him outlining "blocks of papers that could be of help to them that we could consider releasing". The London-based Institute of Contemporary British History asked about fifty historians to draw up a list.

Among historians consulted by the institute were Dr Christopher Andrew, the intelligence expert from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; Professor M. R. D. Foot, chronicler of the Special Operations Executive; and Professor Margaret Gowing, the official historian of the British atomic energy programme.

Working on the principle that simpler things will be easier to obtain, they asked to see the internal histories of clandestine departments including the Special Operations Executive, the Political Warfare Executive and the Information Research Department.

Professor Nicholas Kuri, an Oxford physicist, made a special request for the original German transcripts of the Farm Hall papers—the conversations of six German nuclear scientists who were interned near Cambridge at the end of the second world war. Other requested documents included pre-war production censuses and raw Ultra intelligence obtained

from wartime Enigma decrypts.

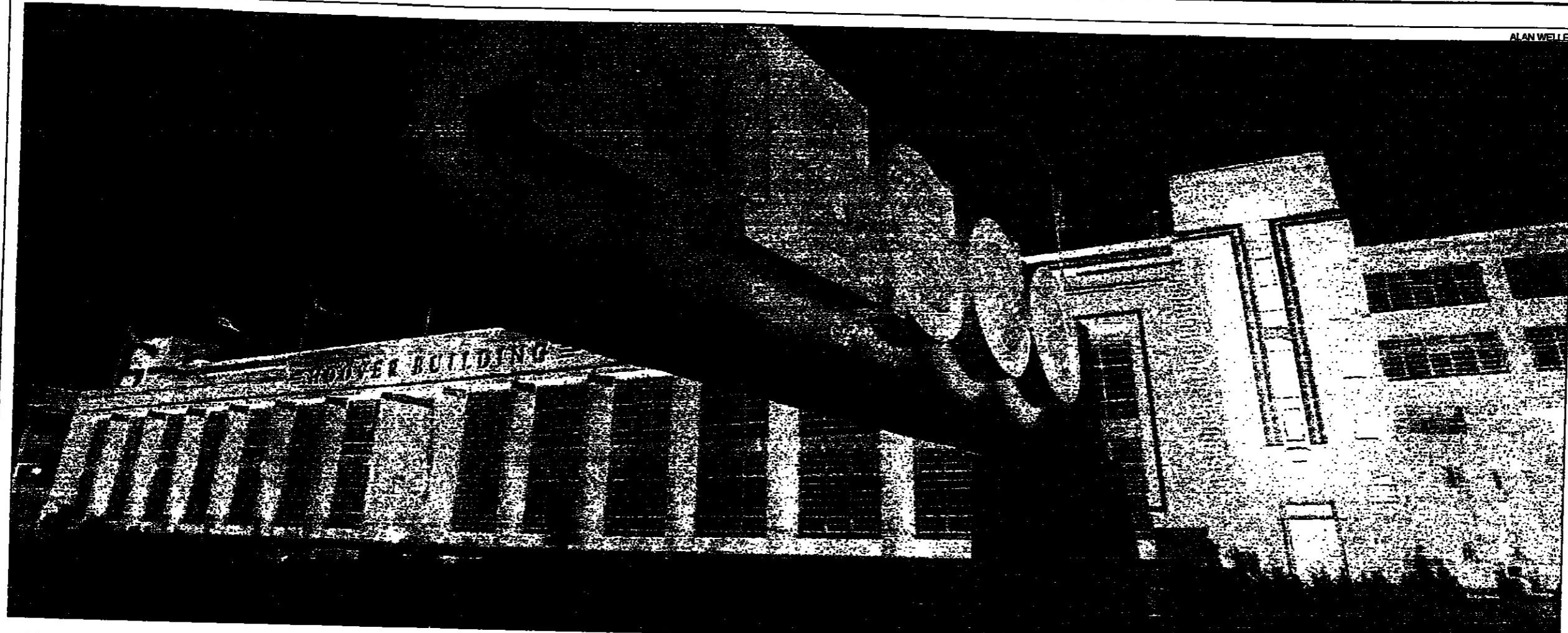
Dr Andrew asked for intelligence material more than 30 years old to be released, provided it did not compromise current intelligence sources and methods and did not breach obligations of confidentiality to agents.

The institute's conference was attended by government officials who handle historical documents, including Sarah Tyacke, keeper of the Public Record Office. They said sensitive documents required time for processing before they could be released and that this would cost more money.

Dr Peter Hennessy, a professor of contemporary history at London University who chaired the symposium, said they were not pressing for a reduction in the 30-year rule but would like to see it implemented more effectively and comprehensively. They did not see themselves as part of the campaign for freedom of information. "This doesn't need any change in the law," he said.

England is poised to beat Russia

England is on the very top in the European team championship in France. England's top stand-off, the world champion, Peter Horne, will play against Dr John Michael Martin, the best against Peter Dorey, and a winning position. England will have inflicted a 17-17 defeat on Russia. But with the same points, England's 12 could push up a point if the game between them had been won by the leader, left to be



ALAN WELLER

Extended sell-by date: the Hoover Building, once a temple of high-tech consumerism, will re-open on Saturday as testament to the principal pursuit of the modern age: shopping (Kate Alderson writes). The listed 1930s building in west London, which

produced vacuum cleaners and washing machines until Hoover left the premises in 1987, starts a new life as Tesco's most glamorous supermarket. Sixty years after its doors first opened, the historic building stands in gleaming splendour on London's Western

Avenue, restored by the architects Lyons, Sleeman & Hoare, with vivid green exterior lighting. There were fears by English Heritage and local planners, when the plans were first submitted a few years ago, that the building's 1930s style would be com-

promised. But everything which gave the building its character has been retained, including the "Hoover Limited" lettering, the flower beds and carefully trimmed lawns. Originally the creation of the architects Wallis, Gilbert and Partners, the factory was

at first described by some as offensive and an atrocity. The Architectural Review despised the factory which was classical in design, without any of the classical trimmings, and many followers of the Modern Movement believed it represented the despicable nature of

1930s architecture. But the Hoover style is now fashionable and a landmark for many Londoners. Shoppers will be able to ponder on their historic heritage as they wander past the vegetables and canned goods with their trolleys.

EC investigates free airline tickets for regular customers

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

THE European Commission is to investigate frequent-flier promotions offered by a growing number of airlines because of fears that they may distort competition and, in some cases, fall foul of tax laws.

Some smaller airlines believe the offers, which are designed to maintain passenger loyalty by providing free flights after a certain number have been paid for, will benefit only large airlines and could help push smaller ones out of business. Even the big carriers, which last year lost £1 billion, are worried that their profits could be hit as more passengers claim free tickets.

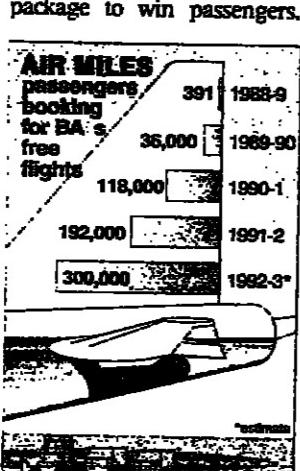
British Airways last week provided its 500,000th free ticket to collectors of Air Miles and more than a million passengers using Europe's big scheduled airlines are expected to fly on free tickets in the next year.

European tax experts believe some schemes may abuse tax laws by providing benefits directly to employees rather than to companies. A spokesman for the EC competition directorate said: "We have asked the airlines to provide us with full details of their frequent-flier programmes and are watching the situation closely before launching a full study early next year."

Frequent-flier loyalty schemes began in the United States, where so many passengers took up the offers that many aircraft were flying with at least half the passengers travelling free. The schemes were thought to be party to

blame for the collapse of Pan Am and other carriers.

In 1988, when British Airways launched its Air Miles scheme, only 391 passengers qualified, but now 6,000 passengers travel free each week, with the total this year expected to exceed 300,000. BA has designed its incentive package to win passengers.



earn revenue and avoid any taxation problems by selling seats at a low price to Air Miles, which provides them as an incentive to customers of banks and retailers which join their scheme.

A BA spokesman said: "We do get a return on the seats we provide, although we cannot say how much and we carefully monitor which flights on which they are then made available." As other airlines in Europe

have started similar schemes, BA is concerned about the EC's investigation, however, because it looks again as if they are trying to regulate liberalisation rather than just let airlines get on with running their own affairs."

□ Hundreds of Euro-MPs and business travellers have snapped up the first air "season ticket" between London and Brussels. The Sabena Skypass, which gives unlimited travel in any one week between Heathrow and either Brussels or Antwerp for £499, was launched by the Belgian carrier last week.

England is poised to beat Russia

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND is on the verge of an historic chess win over Russia in the European team chess championship at Debrecen in Hungary.

In the fifth round, Nigel Short, England's top grandmaster, lost his game to Gary Kasparov, the world champion. Jon Speelman more than made up for this by defeating Evgeny Bareev, while Dr John Nunn drew with Andrei Vizmanov. Michael Adams, the grandmaster from Thirsk, adjourned against Alexei Dreev with what Kasparov has called "a winning position".

If Adams wins this game, England will have inflicted a 2½ to 1½ defeat on Russia. After five rounds, Russia has 13½ points to England's 12 points. But with the game adjourned between them, England could push up to within half a point of the Russian leaders. There are three rounds left to be played.

The way it isn't

CRAIG SOWDEN



From Letters to the Editor,
The Times
November 23, 2042

Sir, In the old days, one could trust union leaders to bear the best interests of the country in mind. Lord Scargill, that doughty warrior, would never in his distinguished career of public service have held the country to ransom. With his cheery Yorkshire wit and genial turn of phrase, he brought a healthy camaraderie to all sides of industry. If only the union leaders of today had half his good humour.

Yours faithfully,
LORD BEN ELTON

November 24, 2042
Sir, One need only recall the warm affection in which the great Derek Hatton was held by all sides of the House to realise how far left-wing poli-

tics have declined this century. In many ways, he could as easily have been Conservative or Labour, for he never subordinated the interests of the country to any narrow political cause. Today's fanatical left-wingers should remember that there was once a time when their forebears enjoyed the trust and respect of the whole country.

Yours etc.,
SIR B. BRAGG

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New tax will mean big cuts, Labour claims

Howard accused of riding roughshod over councils

BY ROBERT MORGAN AND JONATHAN PRYNN

GOVERNMENT proposals for local government spending next year were roundly condemned by Labour in the Commons last night. They would mean cuts in services throughout the country, according to Jack Straw, the shadow environment secretary, who was responding to Michael Howard's announcement of transitional relief for the introduction of the new council tax next April.

The environment secretary, Mr Straw said, had failed the nation once when he introduced the poll tax against

overwhelming hostility, and was now failing the nation a second time. The announced 3.1 per cent increase in the total standard spending was a bogus figure, he said.

Mr Straw said that the rate for a Band C house of £439 which Mr Howard had announced was 15 per cent up on that promised by Michael Heseltine when he was environment secretary. He accused Mr Howard of saying publicly that the tax was fair yet trying to sell it to his backbenchers by explaining how unfair it was. As for the single

person discount, it meant an unmarried company director on £100,000 a year living in a £350,000 house would pay no more than a pensioner couple in a £120,000 house.

The majority of people to gain from the transitional relief would be those who had gained from the poll tax.

In fixing standard spending assessments, the environment secretary was using complex algebraic formulae to ride roughshod over 24,000 democratically elected councillors, Mr Straw said.

Mr Howard said that Mr Straw had said nothing about the need to protect capital projects and to control current spending, nor had he said how much extra should be provided for local authorities next year or how he would raise the money. Mr Howard rejected the suggestion that his figures were bogus. Mr Heseltine's figures he said, were projections produced at Labour's request.

Mr Howard said the leaders of Labour authorities wanted a successful introduction of the council tax. They had told Mr Straw to "soft-pedal" his opposition because they did not want another upheaval with local government tax, and nor did anyone else, except the Labour front bench.

Such figures take no account of other exemptions and reliefs the government is building into the council tax to head off another popular uprising of the kind that scuppered the poll tax.

Nigel Jones, the Liberal Democrat local government spokesman, challenged Mr Howard to give estimates of the number of jobs that would

Straw's lament was the latest in a long line from Labour spokesmen. "If the predictions of the Labour party had been correct we would not have any more teachers or more policemen or any home help."

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Nigel Jones, the Liberal Democrat local government spokesman, challenged Mr Howard to give estimates of the number of jobs that would



be lost and the average council tax levels that would be set for each band. Mr Howard said it was not possible to estimate at what level local authorities would set council taxes and that no jobs would be lost if authorities "managed their resources sensibly" and stuck to the 1.5 per cent price limit.

David Clelland, the Labour

MP for Tyne Bridge, described Mr Howard as "the Marsham Street strangler, slowly choking the life out of democratic local government". Eric Pickles, the former Tory leader of Bradford City Council, said the councils most likely to be hit would be those with poor records of collecting rates, poll tax and rent arrears.

Top-level charge may be £1,000

Confirmed from page 1
Straw, Labour's environment spokesman, condemned Mr Howard's Commons statement on next year's funding of local government as a recipe for thousands of job losses and deep cuts in services. Mr Howard retorted that if councils budgeted sensibly and abided by the 1.5 per cent public sector pay ceiling, their fears would prove groundless.

Some 3.75 million households will benefit from the transitional relief scheme. The maximum rise for households in Band A properties, worth

under £40,000, will be held to £1.75 a week and this ceiling rises in 25 steps through the eight property bands to £3.50 for homes worth more than £320,000. The maximum increase for the "average" Band C homes, worth £52,000-£66,000, will be £2.25 a week. These 3.75 million households, concentrated mainly in London and the South East, will be the main losers from the abolition of the poll tax. Others will pay more but not enough to qualify for transitional relief.

Mr Howard pointedly re-

Tony Travis, page 16
Leading article, page 17

Winners and losers

Where the rich and poor rub shoulders

BY JULIA LLEWELLYN SMITH

LEAVING LONDON

The rich and famous have always been attracted to the garden squares and stucco mansion blocks of Knightsbridge, Chelsea and South Kensington in the south of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. So the news that the area has the largest proportion of higher banded properties in the council tax valuations, with the average property falling in the Band F category of between £120,000 to £160,000, comes as no surprise.

During the boom years of the 1980s, the well-off moved north to make Holland Park and northwards from there in Kensal Town it is still very rundown. The grim council blocks round the Grand Union Canal and the cheap doss-houses of Earl's Court are a million miles away from the multi-million-pound mansions in Knightsbridge.

The borough has some of London's most famous tourist attractions including Kensington Palace. But it is not all mansion blocks and fashionable restaurants. The extreme poverty found in some of its northern council estates led it to be ranked the 17th most deprived area in the country, in a recent Policy Studies Institute report, ahead of traditional depressed spots such as Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Bradford. Areas such as Kensal Town are so rundown that the government gave the

prices for two-bedroomed garden flats in the borough vary from around £250,000 near the King's Road to £59,000 in Kensal Green. Robin Langton, of the estate agents Aylesford, said property prices had fallen about 30 per cent over the past two years, after reaching "dizzy heights" in the 1980s. A house near Kensington Palace worth £1.25 million then would cost around one-third less today; a mansion house in Holland Park worth £6 million would now cost half that.

Joblessness pushes house prices down

BY PAUL WILKINSON

EASINGTON

Less than £9,000 can buy a two-bedroomed terraced house in Easington on the Durham coast. One sold last month for £5,000, but the estate agents admit it was in terrible condition.

Easington, according to a survey by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, is the cheapest place in England to buy a home, but for all its low property values the town is no slum. Vivien Hancil, manager of the local branch of Halifax Property Services agency, said: "This is the sort of town where people still polish their front step every morning. There are some very attractive houses for sale."

The problem is not lack of social pride, it is cash. House prices reflect low wages. As Peter Innes general manager of Easington District Council, put it: "No-one has the income to pay high prices here". The town is in the deeply depressed east Durham region where a quarter of all men have no work. Overall unemployment is 13.5 per cent, and will worsen if Easington colliery, the town's biggest employer, closes as expected in the new year. Its 1,300 workers are sweating out its 90-day review after the

Easington's housing grew with the pit. Last century it was a coastal village, but in 1899 the mine opened to exploit rich coal seams below the North Sea and a new town sprang up around it.

Round the colliery are Victorian terraces, their front doors opening straight on to the pavement. There are also newer coal board semis, many owned by former tenants and exhibiting all the individual improvements that go with private ownership. Little here would sell for more than £40,000. The post office part of town is the old village up the hill from the pit. It has several listed buildings and prices can reach £150,000.

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Government offers MPs three choices on Sunday trading

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY

THE government yesterday took almost unprecedented precautions in its attempt to clear up the confusion over Sunday trading laws. Three options for reform of the law will be unveiled to MPs early next year in an effort to make the debate on the vexed issue as open as possible. MPs will be allowed a free vote.

The first option, favoured by Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, is for total deregulation which would bring the law in England and Wales into line with that in Scotland.

Another proposal which will be put before the Commons will allow any small shop, up to a size yet to be specified, to open at any time, but would restrict large stores to a maximum of six hours' opening on Sundays. The proposal, supported by the Shopping Hours Reform Council, would in-

clude a registration scheme under which shops would have to inform their local authority of their intention to trade on Sunday.

The final option, supported by the Keep Sunday Special Campaign, would impose a general ban on trading, but would exempt shops catering for "recreation, emergencies, social gatherings and travel".

Each option, to be drafted after detailed consultation with all interested groups, will be debated by MPs before a vote and the winner will undergo detailed consideration and amendment in committee.

The proposed timescale for new legislation is confused by the delayed decision of the European Court of Justice, which had been due to rule this month on whether Britain's current laws comply with

EC regulations. No bill will go before Parliament until the court judgment, which is unlikely to be announced until January at the earliest.

The government's caution in offering several options follows its embarrassment in 1986 when, despite a working majority of 100, it was defeated on its bill to reform Sunday trading. Only rarely does a bill come before MPs in such a form, although the human fertilisation and embryo bill took a similar course.

Although Mr Clarke's plans were generally welcomed by MPs as "sensible", he was given notice of a battle over protection of shop workers' rights not to work on Sunday.

He was pressed repeatedly to give an assurance that new laws would include statutory protection for all employees, present and future. Tony Blair, the shadow home secretary, led the demands for protection for all future employees.

"There are many

inside and outside this House who believe that people should have greater freedom to shop on a Sunday provided that 'open on a Sunday' for us does not mean 'exploited on a Sunday' for those who will work in the shops that serve us."

Mr Clarke was unwilling to go further than to pledge that there would be protection for existing shop staff. "We must, however, remember that a great many people would welcome the opportunity to work on a Sunday and their freedom must be protected too."

The extension of six days' trading to seven would not be profitable for all retailers, Robert MacLennan, Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, said. Mr Clarke insisted that it would "stimulate retail activity and create more employment".

Stores divided over the benefits of flouting law

By ROBIN YOUNG

SUPERMARKET chains, garden centres, DIY shops and branches of chains such as Boots, W H Smith and Argos have persisted in opening on Sundays since a European Court preliminary ruling in June which was hailed as a victory by the anti-Sunday trading lobby. The ruling, which was in favour of upholding member states' rights to make their own laws about Sunday trading, brought no fresh observance of Britain's anomaly-ridden Shops Act.

Firms still holding out against Sunday opening include Marks & Spencer, the John Lewis Partnership (and its Waitrose supermarkets),

Coastal defences crumble

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Commons government spending watch-dog, the public accounts committee, has renewed its attack on John Major's European policy, blaming the recession on his two-year adherence to the fixed currencies of the exchange-rate mechanism, warning that a single currency would make matters worse and denouncing the Maastricht treaty as a threat to democracy.

In a report published yesterday, the committee pointed out that the 160 different bodies involved in coastal defence works "led to a piecemeal approach and inhibited a wider strategic view". The report urged the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food to conduct a review of organisation arrangements "to ensure effective and efficient delivery of coastal defence programmes".

A more integrated approach was recommended in a government green paper in 1985 but the committee said current arrangements "fall short" of those envisaged in that document.

MAFF and the Department of the Environment are also recommended to look at simplifying the financing of coastal defences, which is divided between MAFF and district councils and totals £7.8 million in this financial year. Central government grants will provide £4.8 million of the total.

The report expressed concern that "a high percentage" of repair projects were carried out as emergency works and asked MAFF "to consider whether better value for money could be achieved through a more forward-looking approach."

Curbs to go

John Major said at prime minister's questions that he hoped before long "British business would be able to warm its hands on a new bonfire of controls". He was responding to Tory demands for cuts in rules and regulations.

On holiday

The Commons will rise for the Christmas recess on December 17 and return on January 11. The Easter recess is likely to run from April 2 until April 14.

In Parliament

Commons (9.30): Debate on private member's motion on relations with the Arab world.

A LAW FOR PRIVACY?

SHOULD there be a law to protect privacy? Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, and Lord Williams of Mostyn, QC, will join Simon Jenkins, the former editor of *The Times*, and Richard Shepherd MP to debate the issue at the London Press Centre, New Street Square, London EC4 on December 2 at 6.30pm (071-704 9941). Lord Woolf will be in the chair. To obtain tickets to the forum, *Should there be a law to protect privacy?*, being held in association with Rubinstein Callingham, Polden & Gale, fill in the coupon at right.

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Suffer the children: Norma Major, in 10 Downing Street yesterday, meets a group of young victims of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster

PARLIAMENT NEXT WEEK

THE main business in the House of Commons next week is expected to be:

Monday: Social security bill, second reading.

Tuesday and Wednesday: European communities (amendment) bill, progress on committee stage.

Thursday: Judicial pensions and retirement bill, second reading.

Friday: Debate on private member's motion on the United Nations.

The main business in the House of Lords is expected to be:

Monday and Tuesday: British Coal and British Rail (transfer proposals) bill, committee stage.

Wednesday: Debate on the Tomlinson report on hospital provision in London.

Thursday: Criminal justice bill, report.

Breeze of change brings a chill to the Lords

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

HERE was a sharp intake of breath from peers when they learnt of Lord Diamond's modest attempt to eradicate sex discrimination from their ranks.

Oddy, their reaction was not so much one of ingrained male chauvinism, but the knowledge that once they open up one aspect of the peerages system to scrutiny, they don't know where it will end.

The hereditary bill, introduced by the former Labour Treasury minister and debated last night, is flawed. Instead of merely requiring the Queen to change all letters patent so that the eldest child inherits the titles, irrespective of sex,

it gives peers the option. A surer recipe for family feud is harder to imagine.

To many outside the upper House, it is astonishing that the accident-of-birth principle has survived intact into the late 20th century. Passing titles down predominantly through the male line dates back to Richard II. In Scotland this was sometimes changed for the purely technical reason that male heirs had an unfortunate habit of being killed off, endangering the future of the estates.

In 1816, the Redesdale committee agonised over the female inheritance problem, but the peers could not bring themselves to change it. The last real challenge came in 1922 when a brave woman called Lady Rhondda unsuccessfully cited the 1919 Anti-discrimination Act to justify her claim. The most decisive change came with the introduction of life peers in 1958, followed five years later by legislation for the handful of women hereditary peers, mostly with old Scottish titles, to take their seats.

MANY male hereditary peers predicted at the time that such a radical move was the beginning of the end. More recently the issue has been debated from time to time, sending shivers down the spines of the House of Lords authorities. One argument used, ironi-

cally, against change is the hard work put in by women given life peerages, at present totalling 60, and the small group of 17 hereditary women peers. Together with the lack of women MPs, their participation has helped to mask the blatant imbalance. The latest figures show that 45 per cent of all female peers attend at least two-thirds of the sittings compared to only 18 per cent of male peers.

Another argument used in favour of hereditary peers is that they slightly reduce the average age of the upper House. In reality, the figures show that the effect is marginal. For women peers there is only a two-year age gap between life and hereditary.

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Summit success hinges on financial accord

Major's plan seeks to end budget stalemate

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN will table a compromise plan for the future financing of the European Community today to try to break the stalemate over a series of key issues that is threatening failure at next month's Edinburgh summit.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, and Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, are to propose a seven-year plan that will see the EC budget increase by 24 per cent to £60.5 billion in 1993. This marks a considerable cutback in the already scaled-down proposals for future financing put forward by Jacques Delors, the European Commission president, and seems certain to provoke strong opposition at today's joint meeting of foreign and finance ministers in Brussels.

There is a £4 billion gap between the British and Commission proposals. Under M Delors' plan the EC budget would have increased to £64.5 billion in 1993. The proposal has been drawn up by Britain, in its role as EC president, after face-to-face and telephone talks between John Major and his EC counterparts over recent days.

The prime minister regards a deal on financing as an

essential prerequisite for a satisfactory outcome at Edinburgh on the issues of enlarging the Community and of subsidiarity, which is itself to ratify the Maastricht treaty. In a move to pacify the southern EC states, which are keenest to see a big rise in EC expenditure, Britain will today also propose that the EC's structural fund can be doubled, within tight constraints, from £6 billion to £12 billion, but British ministers clearly doubt that this will be enough to satisfy Spain, Portugal and Greece.

Mr Major and his colleagues accept that a deal on financing is needed to rescue the Edinburgh summit. Government officials pointed out last night that the conclusion of both the Maastricht and Lisbon summits had been that enlargement could take place only after a deal on future Community financing had been agreed.

Under the presidency's revised plans to be unveiled today, Britain will be contributing around £600m less in 1993 than it would have done under the original Delors plan. At present the Community's budget amounts to a ceiling of 1.2 per cent of

Community gross national product, or about £47 billion in money terms.

Today Mr Lamont and Mr Hurd will propose that the ceiling be raised to 1.25 per cent of GNP by the year 1999, although they will suggest that there should be no increase at all for the first three years of the intervening period.

M Delors' original financing package suggested that the budget should be increased to £65 billion by 1997. After strong opposition from the contributor countries it was scaled down to a figure of £64 billion by 1993. Britain's concession on the structural fund is clearly needed to placate the southern countries. As Mr Hurd has acknowledged, they were unhappy at the cutting back of the original Delors proposals.

Last night, indeed, it seemed certain that the four poorer EC states — Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain — would resist the plan, described by Whitehall sources as a "tight but realistic overall settlement." Even a doubling of the structural fund would be several billion pounds short of the sum sought by the southern states.



Brussels gibus at 'rundown' Britain

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

HENNING CHRISTOPHERSEN, the EC finance commissioner who astounded national capitals on Monday with his call to pump £50 billion into the Community's economy, has thrown himself into the firing

line again by comparing housing conditions in Britain with those in the former East Germany.

Mr Christophsen had come under pressure from Britain and Germany whose officials spent much of Tuesday pouring cold water on his spending claims. At the same time, Jacques Delors, the Commission president, was understood to be furious with his colleague for so violently throwing the EC's "dash for growth" into the spotlight.

Yesterday a confide Mr Christophsen began a private briefing with Danish journalists by explaining that he had been misunderstood, and that the Commission was prepared to put only around £530 million into the "kickstart" needed by the EC economy.

If that money were matched by member states and private banks, he said, then a guarantee fund run by the European Investment Bank in Luxembourg with sufficient weight to raise £4.8 billion on the international markets should be feasible.

Far from dimming the controversy, however, Mr Christophsen then introduced the subject of housing. "The need

for an effort in the housing sector is obvious. There are many places where the housing stock is run down, like East Germany, and Britain's inner cities," he said.

Mr Christophsen also called on Germany to lower its interest rates to stimulate growth. He said relaxation of monetary controls by the Bundesbank was the key to his growth plan working.

Referring to his ideas on a guaranteed fund, Mr Christophsen said member states could take long-term loans

from the fund to invest in infrastructure projects attracting jobs and new investment. He hoped the total long-term effect would be to encourage private-sector investment valued at his original headline-grabbing figure of £50 billion.

The Danish commissioner wants EC growth to return to the 2.5 per cent level; Norman Lamont, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said on Tuesday it would be nearer 1 per cent next year.

M Delors, meanwhile, has gone to ground on the growth plan altogether. Officials in his 23-strong planning unit in Brussels have been sworn to secrecy after what a former member said had been "an unfortunate incident with a journalist".

Mr Christophsen was anxious to emphasize in his discussion with the journalists that no extra demands would be made on member states to borrow, and that private money would fuel the recovery. "There is no way we can make things work without private investment taking the lead," he said.

The growth plan will be discussed at the Edinburgh summit of EC leaders in two weeks' time.



Christophsen: critical of British housing

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	£60,000+	6.40%		6.00%	
	£50,000+	6.20%		5.90%	
	£40,000+	6.00%		5.80%	
	£30,000+	5.80%		5.70%	
	£20,000+	5.60%		5.60%	
	£10,000+	5.40%		5.50%	
	£1+	5.30%		5.20%	
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	£100,000+	7.00%		6.20%	
	£90,000+	6.80%		6.10%	
	£80,000+	6.60%		6.00%	
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	£60,000+	6.20%		5.70%	
	£50,000+	6.00%		5.60%	
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	£40,000+	5.80%		5.00%	
	£30,000+	5.60%		4.80%	
	£20,000+	5.40%		4.60%	
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	£1+	5.10%		4.30%	
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	£100,000+	6.00%		4.20%	
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	£60,000+	5.20%		3.40%	
	£50,000+	5.00%		3.20%	
	£40,000+	4.80%		3.00%	
	£30,000+	4.60%		2.80%	
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	£50,000+	5.70%		3.89%	
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	£30,000+	5.28%		3.43%	
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	£14,000+	4.55%		2.85%	
	£12,000+	4.35%		2.65%	
	£10,000+	4.15%		2.45%	
	£1+	4.05%		2.30%	
**Overseas 3 Month Capital (International First Class) (Closed Issue)					
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	£10,000+	4.05%		3.25%	
	£5,000+	4.25%		3.45%	
	£2,500+	4.35%		3.55%	
	£1,000+	4.45%		3.65%	
	£1+	4.55%		3.75%	
†**Overseas 3 Month Capital (International First Class) (Closed Issue)					
	£25,000+	3.05%		2.35%	
	£10,000+	3.95%		3.15%	
	£5,000+	4.15%		3.35%	
	£2,500+	4.25%		3.45%	
	£1,000+	4.35%		3.55%	
	£1+	4.45%		3.65%	
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FORTE CREST

In a business class of its own

Russian leader pursues double strategy of appeasement and resistance on eve of Congress

Centrists increase pressure on Yeltsin

BY ANNE McELVOY

One radical cabinet member gone, the post of state secretary abolished and the foreign minister fighting to escape becoming the third sacrificial lamb: the events of the past two days leave little doubt that Civic Union, Russia's centre-right opposition, is leading the government firmly by the nose in the run-up to next week's Congress of People's Deputies.

The fate of Mikhail Poltoranin and Gennadi Burbulis and the uncertainty surrounding the future of Andrei Kozyrev are proof of the Union's mounting influence since President Yeltsin's reform programme ran into a crisis of confidence in the summer. The conservative umbrella group, clustered around the military-industrial complex, wanted heads to roll as a symbolic recognition by the government that it must change course.

Mr Yeltsin chose to duck confrontation and comply. He needs Civic Union's support to ensure that his government survives the Congress at all and is prepared to dispense with colleagues to get it.

Led by Arkady Vol'sky, head of the industrialists' union, and with Aleksandr Rutskoi, the vice-president, providing moral support, the Union is the only opposition group to boast a coherent alternative strategy for Russian reform. Mr Vol'sky is one of the great survivors who has effortlessly passed from the Soviet to the Russian cause. Mikhail Gorbachev, in one of those ironies in which Kremlinology is rich, offered him Mr Yeltsin's job as Moscow party chief when Mr Yeltsin was accused of ill-discipline and stripped of this post in 1987. He declined it, apparently out of loyalty to Mr Yeltsin, and was sent as governor to Nagorno-Karabakh.

He is a well-balanced individual who boasts that essential biographical detail among post-communist political figures, a clean record in the coup days. He appears to have no personal animus against Mr Yeltsin, but is motivated by a strong conviction that Russia should be a strong state, sustained by the heavy industry and military forged by Stalin.

He wants to boost production by feeding ailing industries state subsidies and match price rises with pay increases. His frequently repeated motto is that the transition to the market is too important to be left to the market to regulate. Such sentiments betray his attachment to centralism.

Civic Union would throw overboard the shock therapy package recommended by the West and supported by the International Monetary Fund and pursue a more gradual transformation to the free market, protecting the vast and inefficient former Soviet enterprises from the collapse inevitable under the current policy of extensive privatisation. Its desire to stimulate military exports could jeopardise the excellent relations built up with the West over the past year.

Its members bemoan Russia's fall from superpower to beggar nation and have promised to make it more self-reliant and confident. Beneath its economic pragmatism and cynical political manoeuvring lurks a message of isolationist revisionism waiting to be heard and there are many in Russia with ears to hear it.

Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, discussed with Sergiu Celac of Romania, Tibor Antalpeter of Hungary and Ivan Stancioff of Bulgaria, ways that the latest United Nations Security Council reso-

Second Moscow reformer dismissed

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday dispensed with a second leading member of his reform team in two days, abolishing the post of state secretary held by Gennadi Burbulis, his close aide, in an attempt to use carefully calculated concessions to buy off opposition to his government before next week's Congress of People's Deputies.

Mr Burbulis will be moved sideways to head a group of advisers to the Russian president. The decision to dissolve the post of state secretary comes a day after the resignation of Mikhail Poltoranin, the information minister, who was also a close friend.

By attacking the post rather than sacking its holder, Mr Yeltsin hopes to satisfy the substance of demands by Civic Union, his main critic, for sweeping personnel changes while keeping his reforms on course.

The Russian leadership is

pursuing a double strategy of appeasement and resistance in the hope of wringing a mandate for strong government from the congress, made up of mainly conservative deputies. Yegor Gaidar, the prime minister and architect of Mr Yeltsin's radical reform programme, announced anti-crisis measures to stabilise the failing Russian economy. In doing so he told parliament that he would not bow to Civic Union's demands for the restoration of state controls in the transition to a market economy.

In a robust defence of the reform programme, Mr Gaidar said he was not willing to sanction a "limitless money supply". He was referring to demands from the industry lobby to grant generous state credits before the end of the year to save former Soviet enterprises from bankruptcy and to ward off increases in unemployment. He also an-

nounced that there would be no freeze on prices and salaries, and rejected conservative demands for intervention to shore up the rouble.

Akaki Vol'sky, the main Civic Union leader, accused the government of renegeing on a promise to include his conservative grouping's proposals in the document. And several hardline deputies responded to the package with demands for a no-confidence vote in Mr Gaidar.

The union had demanded the resignations of Mr Poltoranin and Mr Burbulis and has also targeted Andrei Kozyrev, the foreign minister.

His fate hung in the balance after reports yesterday that his resignation was imminent. It is believed, however, that Mr Yeltsin may try to retain him until the congress convenes, keeping open the option of sacrificing him during the session to appease the hardliners. The resignation of

Pyotr Aven, the foreign trade minister, is also expected.

Mr Kozyrev is seen by conservatives as having sold out Russia's interests to the West. He said yesterday that he had received assurances from Mr Yeltsin that he was safe, a guarantee which often means little in Russian politics.

The reshuffle preceding congress demonstrates Mr Yeltsin's readiness to compromise with the opposition, even at the price of using colleagues as bargaining counters. The rightness of this policy will be judged by its outcome and it is far from certain that Civic Union will be satisfied with the concessions Mr Yeltsin is offering.

The Russian leader has placed strategy above sentiment this week, considering that the advantage to be gained from unseating Mr Poltoranin and Mr Burbulis was greater than the pull of

Aleksandr Sokolov, of the Socialist Party of Working People, said it was "totally false" for the West to assume that "people who oppose the reforms are against democracy", adding: "It is a widely spread mistake that Russian democracy is personalised in certain people and names. It is a big mistake. Democracy is a general notion."



In cold blood: Borislav Herak, 21, a Serb soldier accused of murdering 29 Muslims over the past several months, waits in an interrogation room in a Bosnian army jail in Sarajevo. The UN Human Rights Commission meets next week to discuss documenting atrocities in Bosnia

Serb widows stop UN aid reaching Muslim enclave

FROM TIM JUDAH IN BRATUNAC

THE hills of Srebrenica were silhouetted against the dying sun last night. They are clearly visible from the cemetery of Bratunac. Black-clad Bosnian Serb women knelt in the mud before the fresh graves of their sons and husbands and candles flared on the freshly dug earth piled over Zoran Blagojevic, buried half an hour before.

Eighty thousand people are believed to be under siege in the Muslim enclave of Srebrenica but no one is sure

tarian assistance bound for Srebrenica stood idle in a market place. But the people of Serb-held Bratunac were waiting. A crowd of 500 was ready for visitors. "Don't threat with power" read one placard in English. "We are the power". In the distance the crackle of machinegun fire broke the eerie twilight already alive with the plaintive mourning chants of the women black.

The people and military commanders of Bratunac now preventing aid from reaching Srebrenica have plunged relations between the UN and the Bosnian Serb authorities into crisis. Aid to Serb-held parts of Bosnia has been suspended and, last night, General Philippe Morlison, the UN commander, and General Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb commander, were holding talks.

Elsewhere, the UN had good news. A relief convoy carrying 80 tonnes of aid reached the stranded Muslim town of Gorazde after being delayed by a mine explosion, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said.

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as it is now the last known place in Bosnia not to have received a single crust of bread from the UN or any other aid agency. Twice already the women of Bratunac have blocked the roads to prevent armed convoys getting through. "Never, never, never," yelled the women yesterday. "You will never feed our enemies."

On the Serbian bank of the river Drina three UN armoured personnel carriers and 20 trucks with humanitarian assistance bound for Srebrenica stood idle in a market place. But the people of Serb-held Bratunac were waiting. A crowd of 500 was ready for visitors. "Don't threat with power" read one placard in English. "We are the power". In the distance the crackle of machinegun fire broke the eerie twilight already alive with the plaintive mourning chants of the women black.

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Kalashnikov army unfit for the fight

FROM MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT, IN SPLIT, CENTRAL BOSNIA

THE local Croatian newspaper in central and southern Bosnia-Herzegovina call them "the heroic defenders". They are the soldiers in their dark green and brown combat fatigues defending the line against the advancing Serbs. In reality, there is little heroism, scant evidence of serious defending and certainly no deadly weapons with which to fight the Serbs when they come down the road. When the young Croatian and Muslim fighters come off duty to go home to sleep, they hand over their Kalashnikovs to the next shift. There are not enough to go around.

The Croats and their Muslim allies are facing Serbs who have superior weapons. As a result they have developed a siege mentality which affects their attitude towards military operations. This is most noticeable in the Travnik area, where the fear of a Serbian advance dominates the town. A general mobilisation has been ordered for men aged 17 to 45 to provide them with training in the old army barracks. As

the older men become weary with the long hours and the strain of waiting for the Serbs, the younger generation is being pushed forward. But they have neither the heart nor the experience to cope with suddenly having to defend their territory and their families with a pitiful supply of weapons.

This is not a war for the infantry. The defenders are not fighting on street corners in arm-to-arm combat with the Serbs. The young men being pushed forward into the front line know nothing of military tactics. They are taught to fire their Kalashnikovs, but their training does not include mounting counter-offensives or launching night raids on Serbian artillery positions. It is not that sort of war.

Mojkovac Yugoslav workers in this Montenegrin town are working round the clock to repair a makeshift dam that is threatening to unleash seven million tonnes of toxic waste into Balkan rivers. Locals call it "Montenegro's Chernobyl". (Reuters)

Man held over racist attacks in Germany

FROM JOHN HOLLAND IN BERLIN

THE German federal prosecutor's office in Karlsruhe announced yesterday that police have detained a right-wing extremist who they believe may be connected to the firebombing in Mölln in which three Turks were killed.

Rudolf Seiters, the German interior minister, told the Berlin *Morgenpost* yesterday that his office expects to announce a ban on two right-wing groups, the Deutsche Alternative and the National Front, this week. The two groups claim a total of 500 members.

The police arrested the 25-year-old man on suspicion of attempted murder and attempted arson in at least three other firebombings in Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Investigators are also seeking ten others

and are a dangerous echo of tactics used by the Nazi party 60 years ago.

A survey by the German INFAS institute found that 76 per cent (up from 61 per cent a year ago) of Germans agreed with the statement: "In Germany there are far too many foreigners, guest-workers and asylum seekers. They are taking jobs away from Germans, infiltrating German culture and staying here. Therefore we must demand - foreigners out."

In one survey 37 per cent of Germans said they should "start to defend themselves" against the refugee influx.

The surveys come as several Jewish and Turkish leaders have said their communities may soon need to arm themselves against neo-Nazis.



Seiters likely to ban two right-wing groups

percent of Germans ready to accept greater police powers, including the right to tap phones. Citizens' rights activists have said such moves could ultimately turn Germany into a police state

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De Klerk sets 1994 target for multiracial election

FROM MICHAEL HAMILYN IN PRETORIA

SOUTH Africa was aiming to be ready to stage multiracial elections by April 1994 with an interim government of national unity in place before the end of that year, President de Klerk said last night.

The government considers it in the best interests of the country that a fully representative government of national unity should be in place no later than the first half of 1994," he said.

The president added that such a government would function under a transitional constitution which would, among other things, provide for an elected parliament and executive. The first important hurdle, he said, was the completion of bilateral talks with as many parties as possible.

UK shifts policy on Timor

BY DAVID WATTS,
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

WITH East Timor under increased repression following the arrest of Xanana Gusmao, leader of the Fretilin independence movement, Britain has signalled it believes that the question of Timorese participation in talks on the territory should be considered.

In a letter to a Tory MP, Alistair Goodlad, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, indicates that Britain now fully supports the Boutros Boutros Ghali, the United Nations secretary-general, in getting all parties in the conflict to the negotiating table. In the past the UN has been content to leave the talks in the hands of the Portuguese and the Indonesians.

Senior Fretilin would represent Fretilin but the Indonesians are seeking to discredit him. He has been branded a "street criminal" by Benny Mardani, the defence minister. Australia, Portugal and human rights groups have expressed concern over the safety of Senior Xanana whose whereabouts are unknown since his arrest last Friday.

John Major and John Smith, the Labour leader, during his visit to London two weeks ago; but it may come as a disappointment to the black liberation movements that have anticipated a faster transition.

Cyril Ramaphosa, the secretary general of the African National Congress, said in Durban this week that he would expect to see a constituent assembly elected within twelve months. Dikgang Moseneke, of the Pan Africanist Congress, spoke of a similar time scale to the foreign press on Wednesday.

Western diplomats in Pretoria however believe that the programme laid down by Mr de Klerk is much more realistic. The president yesterday also welcomed the adoption by the ANC national executive of their new strategy for negotiations, which envisages the possibility of power sharing even after second elections under a new constitutional dispensation.

He said that there seemed to be a growing convergence of opinion that power sharing would be needed after the enactment of a final new constitution. "The whole trend of thought and the drift of the debate is promising, and I welcome that," he said.

In a background paper issued as he spoke, Mr de Klerk explained his view that power sharing meant that the party gaining 51 per cent of the vote

should not get 100 per cent of power at all levels of government. The paper said that "for elections to be free and fair it is inconceivable that political parties should have private armies"; a clear reference to the ANC and its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

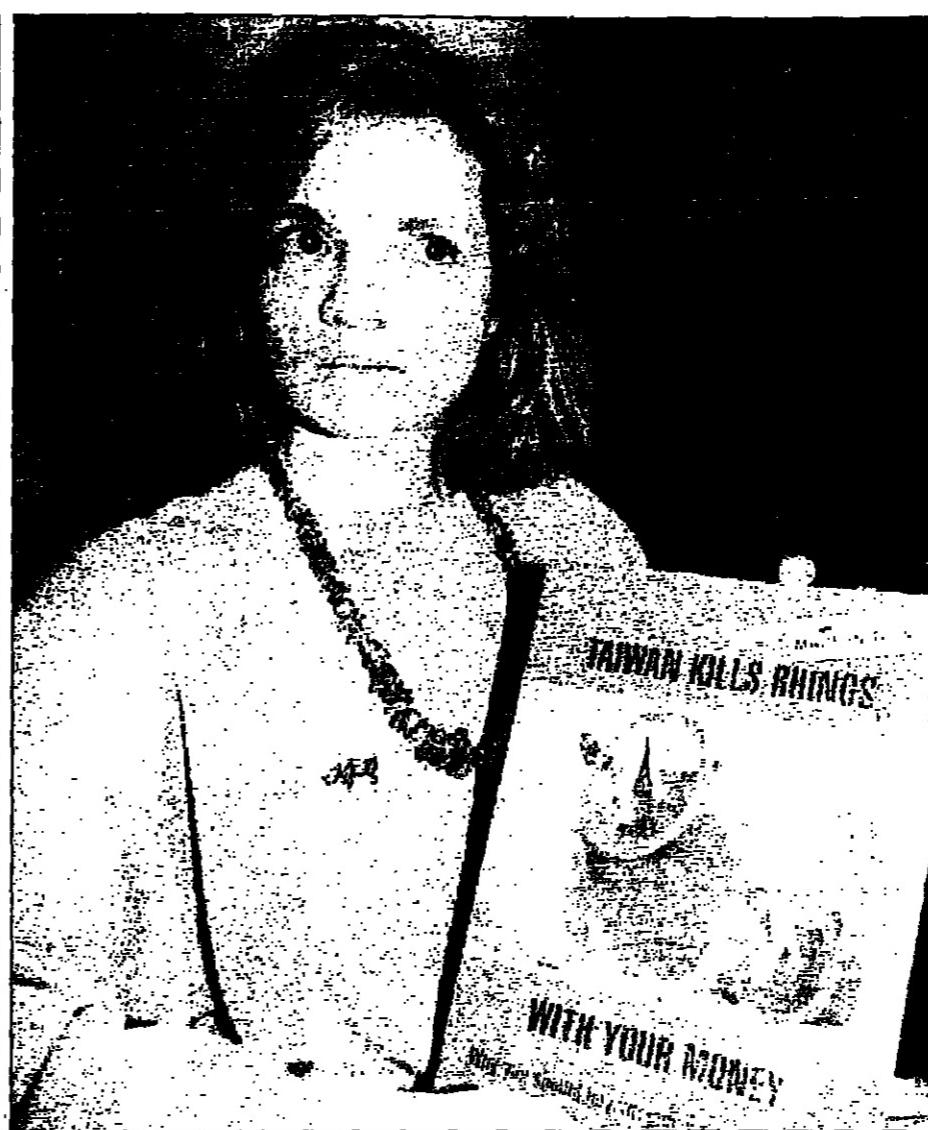
"Our people and our leaders must come out openly in full support of political tolerance and reconciliation if peace is to be attained," the paper adds.

In another development Nelson Mandela, president of the ANC, made it clear yesterday that he had not dropped preconditions for peace talks with Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, chief minister of KwaZulu and president of the Inkatha Freedom Party.

But Chief Buthelezi is unlikely to accept that his followers should agree not to carry their traditional weapons or that the migrant hostels should be fenced, as Mr Mandela demands, before they meet. "The violence will not end just because they meet," said a senior diplomat yesterday, "but if they cannot even agree to meet what hope is there of getting their followers to stop fighting?"

■ **Mmabatho:** Police broke

Christian crosses as they blocked a march here yesterday by about 30 clergymen protesting against the human rights record of Bophuthatswana, a nominally independent black homeland. (Reuters)



TAIWAN KILLS RHINOS

WITH YOUR MONEY

Island targeted: Rosalind Reeve, campaign co-ordinator for the London-based Environmental Investigation Agency, displaying an agency pamphlet in Taipei yesterday, which asks people to boycott Taiwanese products. Conservation groups, accusing Taiwan of allowing illegal imports of rhinoceros horn, said that they would organise a boycott in Europe and the United States. "Taiwan is a black hole in the endangered species trade. The government's reaction to date will only perpetuate this," Miss Reeve said. (Reuters)

Unita snubs Angolan parliament

FROM SAM KILEY
IN LUANDA

ANGOLA'S first democratically elected government was installed yesterday but the opposition Unita (Union for the Total Independence of Angola) party refused to attend the ceremony for fear of assassination attempts against its leaders.

Observers agreed that the colourful but swift ceremony at the Palace of the Congress in the centre of Luanda, the capital, did not represent a step forward for democracy in Angola but, a step back to a one-party state under the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

While the party faithful voted in unison for the MPLA-nominated president and his deputy, the 22 delegates from other parties sat indifferently through the proceedings. One non-MPLA politician who declined to give his name for fear of reprisals said: "If this is the future I won't bother coming again. We need an opposition to make democracy work and prevent dangerous constitutional changes that the MPLA might make."

One change expected from hardliners in the once Marxist MPLA could be the outlawing of Unita. "That would certainly result in widespread fighting. At the moment there seems to be only isolated military clashes," a Western ambassador present at yesterday's ceremony said.

Somali agencies reject troops

BY JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND DAVID WATTS IN LONDON

AN AMERICAN offer of up to 30,000 troops to transform the inadequate United Nations effort to save the starving in Somalia into an humanitarian operation met almost universal opposition from relief agencies last night.

The American troops would serve as part of an expanded UN force ready to fight to get aid to the needy without it being looted by the armed bands that rule the country.

Lawrence Eagleburger, the acting US Secretary of State, made the offer in an unannounced meeting with Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary-general, on Wednesday.

said. Another aid source said that it was far more important to put pressure on General Muhammad Farrah Aidid to get things under control and to ensure that the present UN plans for the deployment of 3,500 guards were fully implemented. "The first time a foreign soldier kills a Somali is the end of the foreign aid operation," another relief official added.

Only 500 men have now been deployed in the capital, Mogadishu, but none had yet been sent to the crucial aid centres at Berbera and Bosasso because of opposition from the warring factions.

This whippet is a victim of recession.
It used to be a labrador.



When this picture was taken Sally weighed 26lbs. The normal weight for a one year old labrador is about 60lbs.

The RSPCA inspector who rescued her found that every one of her ribs was visible and estimated that she had not been fed by her owner for over three weeks.

Our uniformed inspectors are constantly being called upon to cope with the effects of the recession on animals.

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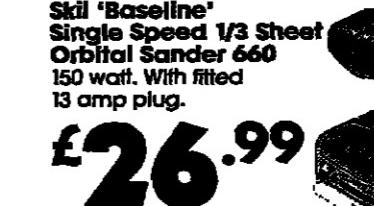
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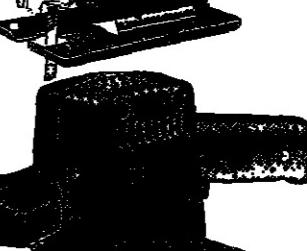
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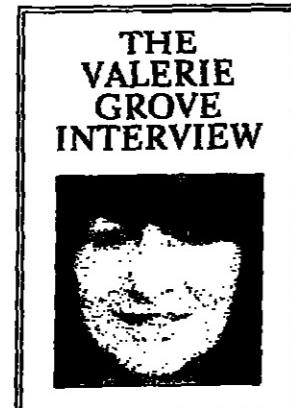


When animal acts are out, recession is in and times are tough in the big top, send in the controversial clown

A slap in the face for the British clown

It has been an *annus horribilis* for Gerry Cottle too. The last two months have been his worst for ten years. There is the "bloody stupid" objection to animal acts, barring him from setting up his tent in London's lucrative parks. He says nobody can survive with a people-only circus; he's tried it. "There is the recession, the rain, the mud. But on Wednesday his *découpage* arrived from Los Angeles: the cme and *símpatizante* Denise Payne, aka Baby D, who will star in his Christmas circus at Wembley.

Now I am not partial to clowns. They belong like Punch and Judy and pantomime dames to the parental Danegeld of childhood tradition, a great relief when outgrown. But if there's got to be clowns as Stephen Sondheim said, we must confront our dog-on-hind-legs Johnsonian



hired Mrs Payne expressly for her game willingness to do PR. She will juggle and ride her unicycle through children's hospital wards and schools in Brent. He says he cannot get this kind of co-operation from the native clown. You can see young clowning talent on the piazza at Covent Garden any day, he says. But if you hire them, after the first summer's novelty has worn off they don't want to muck in or woo children in schools, or do two shows a day, or travel the road 40 weeks a year. They want longer holidays and more freedom. "They are prima-donnas," he says. "To me they are useless."

They also tend to be jokers in the Joe Grimaldi tradition, in check suits, big shoes and red noses. The jokers were out in force at Heathrow on Wednesday, armed with Yank-go-home placards and spray cans of "custard-pie", ie, shaving cream, which they aimed at Mr Cottle for the cameras. (His garrulity never quite recovered from having swallowed a mountain.) Far funnier than the clowns was the sight of the mob of cameramen descending in full cry upon a small round black lady with bright yellow hair and a zany orange hat — not Baby D at all.

When the real Mrs Payne at last materialised she proved to be as obliging and articulate as Mr Cottle had promised.

As Baby D Mrs Payne wears a floral print romper suit, outsize bonnet and a doo-doo expression, and goes about making a nuisance of herself. She has an outsize bottle that squirts water, and a giant "pacifier", or dummy. Mrs Payne says children love it; they may fear conventional clown figures, but a baby — even a five-foot baby — is safe.

She is not a joker but an auguste, a character clown in the Emmett Kelly tradition. She does "sight gags": taking an ordinary object and using it in an extraordinary way. Taking a chair away when someone is about to sit down, she explained, is a sight gag. Cajoled into doing her Baby D act, she blushed at a cameraman in a pestiferous baby way. "He's embarrassed," she said. "So it works."

"Do Americans like being grabbed?" "Oh yes. Oh my, yes."

Apart from the tiresome baby, she has invented a character called Aunt Helen. "She wears a decorous dress hat, white gloves and a purse, sort of regular Sunday goin'-to-mesin' clothes. But the things she does are *not* lady-like. She takes me by surprise; some of the stuff I get myself into."

British clowns say she can't possibly understand the British sense of humour. But the real obstacle is British unease about women clowning at all.



Trouper: Denise Payne will do the unglamorous hospital rounds this season — whereas British clowns, according to Gerry Cottle, are prima donnas

We admire verbal comedy. We like the wit of Victoria Wood, French and Saunders. But falling-down women embarrass us. "Well," she said, "you know that song, 'Anything you can do I can do better?' — sung with great aplomb by Kim Criswell in the new *Annie Get Your Gun*, which opened in London this week. "Well, I feel like that. I like to prove that I can do things. I don't like to set limitations on myself. I go ahead and at least try. You don't see many women clowns. And a black lady clown, even less. But taking a slap fails is part of being a clown. It takes the audience by even more surprise, especially if she's dressed like a lady. The audience laughs instantly and spontaneously. It might be a nervous laugh, but they do laugh. I like slapstick stuff. I like real life situations that make you roll on the ground."

She had a peripatetic childhood as her father was in the American air force; her mother was a schoolteacher. They moved from air base to air base. She went to nine different schools before high school, and has no recollection of ever seeing a circus until she performed in one herself.

"I just knew when I was a kid of seven that I wanted to be some kind of performer, even a baton twirler." All her siblings had proper ambitions — to be a teacher, a nurse and an airman — and fulfilled them. She kept quiet about her plans, but would write plays

and them out with neighbourhood kids. She ended up at "Sac State", California state university at Sacramento, reading French, zoology and drama. "I had a little job at a children's amusement park called Fairytale Town. I was playing a ventriloquist's dummy in a vaudeville act when a lady came backstage and told me that with my facial expressions I could make a living as a clown. My first reaction was, 'What is this? Get outta here!'"

Brothers Barnum and Bailey

circus at Venice, Florida.

Nobody can clown for the Ringlings without attending this course. "You work a 14-hour day and you don't do any written work but boy, you make mental notes. And you get taught by the great old clowns."

The first woman clown graduate was Mandi Lou Flippin in 1970, and there are still fewer than 30 women in the Klowns of America union.

She has been married for 11 years to big, gentle Bill Payne, an assistant ringmaster and sometime sex player. They met through the circus one

night in a snowstorm that cancelled the show. "If you work on the Ringling show," he says, "you live with 400 other employees on a brightly painted train that's one mile long, instead of in caravans."

When they got to Richmond, Virginia, he found Denise studying a guidebook about the Civil War sites of Richmond. "Up to that point," drawls Bill, "all I ever did was hang out with the boys, and play pool." Now he joined her walking round the historic places. They did the same in all the 90 cities the circus stopped at in the next two years. By Philadelphia they

were dating, by New York they went to all the Broadway shows and by Sacramento, in 1981, they married. For five years they lived in New York on the fringes of show business. Denise playing in summer stock, in musicals such as *Hello Dolly* and *The Wizard of Oz*. They have no children. "Just us two kids," she says. Now they live in North Hollywood and work in the Los Angeles community circus. She wouldn't mind being a straight actress again. "But clowning gets in the way. And I love clowning so much."

"I am a trouper. In the circus you have to join in, help set up and tear down and fetch props, that's the essence of circus life. I love doing stuff like that that you don't join a circus just to be a clown or a high wire walker. So many circus people are third or fourth generation. It's unique, it's like a sanctuary to come to."

Her mother begged her not to go to England when she saw the British clowns' protest on the *Today* show. "And when I first heard about it I was real scared. But after the custard pie throwing, *Barney* — Peter Barnes, chairman of Clowns International — gave me such a warm, strong handshake, and said: 'Welcome to England' with good eye contact. It literally made my fears go."

Clever showman, Gerry Cottle. What's a custard pie in the face when you can alchemise such publicity out of adversity?

vehicle with its lights shining out to sea, someone trying to launch or bring in a boat when the tide is wrong, people out late at night with binoculars or perhaps a man standing on a slipway without any fishing equipment.

With the end of the red and green channels at ports and airports and the general reductions of frontier controls from next January, we are going to have to depend much more heavily on intelligence targeting. So what we are trying to do is build up a picture of our coastline."

Although the volunteer force is sent regular Coastwatch bulletins, its members are not given specific car registration numbers or ship names to look out for — "you can never screen people entirely reliably and we are not in the business of providing a smugglers' information service" — and they are warned never to take any direct action if they see anything suspicious.

The Dover coastal intelligence team has so far received 36 calls from its coastwatchers. "Some of them have certainly helped us add to, or confirm, information we were already working on," Mr Way says. In Yorkshire and Humberside, where a similar scheme has been developed to watch over the coast south of Bridlington, customs officers last month recovered 16 kilos of smuggled cannabis after a pensioner's tip-off.

WILLIAM GREAVES

New mission for dad's army

Home Guard marches into action
as drug runners stalk our shores

From his vantage point on a desolate headland, Bob Way scanned the grey waters of the English Channel through powerful binoculars. "Yes, this would be an ideal spot for anyone trying to land drugs," he said. "A gently shelving beach, no tidal problems, a good access road and a big enough village nearby to get lost in within minutes. The trouble is — I could show you another 30 places which would be just as good."

The 108 miles of coast which form England's south-east corner between Seaford, in Whitsand Bay, and Eastbourne might not look as menacingly lawless as the coves and creeks of Daphne du Maurier's Cornwall but her beleaguered excise men did not have to contend with high-powered RIBs — rigid inflatable boats — dropping off contraband that can be easily concealed and is hard to detect. A packet of heroin worth £100,000 may be only the size of a 2lb sugar carton.

The proximity of the Kent and East Sussex coast to mainland Europe makes it one of Britain's most susceptible



Fight them on the beaches: the volunteer force should make life harder for drug smugglers

— hence their affectionate "Dad's army" sobriquet — and many have, or have had, jobs which gave them experience of the sea. Not all live on the coast, however, because local advertising campaigns have brought forward volunteers who walk their dogs or have other reasons for regularly visiting vantage areas.

This week's seizure of 1.1 tonnes of cocaine, worth £16 million, aboard an oil rig support vessel in the Thames was the biggest ever customs drug haul in British waters, but bulk smuggling is unusual. Small, highly profitable, drops by RIBs, which can

cross the Channel from France or Holland in half-an-hour and three hours respectively, are both more popular and harder to detect. The boats slide on to the shore, throw off their cargo and disappear within seconds.

Equally hard to spot are the light aircraft, which dive low over a selected field to drop their payload and fly on to a pre-arranged destination without any apparent deviation from their authorised flight path.

To assist the amateur

coastwatchers, they have been issued with silhouette drawings of aircraft ranging from

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WHEN COMPAQ DECIDED to invest in newspaper advertising, their objective was to increase sales of PC Notebooks by 40%. Surprisingly for a company for whom accuracy is a byword, their projection was 3% out. Sales increased by 43%. Unsurprisingly, the new market leaders are now firm believers in the power of the press. Press advertising is a uniquely persuasive medium which can achieve for your product what it's helped achieve for Compaq. Don't compromise. Talk to your media buyer about newspapers.

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مكتبة الفصل

Every successful politician needs luck, but the hard-pressed Chancellor has had precious little of it recently, says Anthony Howard

Poor Norman Lamont has had more bad luck than most politicians. First, his house of Notting Hill Gate was, shortly after he arrived at No 11, inadvertently rented out to a "sex therapist" — leading to a feast of fun at the Chancellor's expense in the tabloid press. It was not his fault the house had been leased through an agency, but no public figure caught in that sort of pickle ever stands a chance.

The headlines could have been written in a sub-editor's sleep — "Tory Whip Shock" predictably led the field — but that was not the end of the Chancellor's embarrassment. The neighbours joined in, as neighbours will, registering shock and outrage, with one of them even immorally threatening, "I shall certainly write to my MP". Worse than that, the pastor of the nearby Kensington Temple rose to the occasion with a promise to offer counselling to the wayward tenant and a sanguine declaration that he would be asking his congregation to pray for her. "Although we

condemn the sin, we love the sinner". From the viewpoint of the nation's newsmen, that was just the stuff to give the troops and the story began to run and run. By the time conducted journalists' tours had been arranged of the alleged basement "vice den" a good time had been had by one and all — except perhaps for the unfortunate mortified Lamont.

It was the kind of misfortune that Dennis Skinner himself might stop short of wishing on a political opponent, even though, once it was out in the open, it necessarily provided irresistible material for Commons taunts. In his gloomiest moments the Chancellor may even have consoled himself with the reflection that it was the sort of accident that could only happen to a politician once. He knows better now. Yesterday's revelation about

his often exceeding the monthly limit on his personal credit card belongs to exactly the same banana skin department.

It is as well to be clear just what this latest expose amounts to. Like most of the rest of us, Mr Lamont finds dealing in plastic a convenience. He was perhaps a little late in joining the credit revolution, since he has apparently held his current National Westminster Access credit card for just under eight years. In that time, according to the Sun's obliging mole (presumably underground at Access's HQ in Southend), the Chancellor has — shock, horror this time rather than muddle, muddle — exceeded his credit limit of £2,000 no fewer than 22 times.

But how heinous a charge is that? Looked at another way, it means that the number of months in

which Mr Lamont has kept within the rules exceeds those in which he hasn't by a ratio of at least four-to-one. The rest of us might well be tempted to murmur, "That we should be so lucky".

Nevertheless, Mr Lamont is, of course in a special position. As the steward of the nation's finances over the past two years, should he not be expected to set a provident example? To be fair, it is by no means clear how improvident he has been to spend, as the Chancellor allegedly did 10 days ago, £17.47 at an off-licence when already in monthly arrears hardly argues a reckless attitude even to the domestic economy. And let us have no nonsense about special or favoured treatment. Mr Lamont got away with his purchase because the sum involved was too small for the off-licence assistant to need to check with Access for authorisation.

At the worst, therefore, all the Chancellor has done is further to dent any reputation he still enjoys for financial responsibility and prudence. But that is hardly a

discovery likely to provoke a collective nervous breakdown, even within the Treasury. No one, after all, has ever believed that Norman Lamont is a Stafford Cripps or even a Roy Jenkins. In the classic division of politicians between bishops and bookmakers he has always carried the aura of the racetrack about with him rather than that of the cathedral close.

Given the House of Commons vote against MPs' salary increases this week, it is probably the last moment to open up that argument — even if cabinet ministers, along with high court judges, remain among the prime casualties of post-war inflation. At £5,000 a year in the 1930s, Norman Lamont would have been a rich man. But then in those days, as the Chancellor may even now be usefully reminding himself, there would have been no temptation to exploit the use of a credit card either.

Tory heartland takes the strain

The council tax will cost suburbia dear, writes Tony Travers

Michael Howard has made the best of a bad job. Yesterday, the environment secretary did all he could to reconcile the irreconcilable. His objectives include holding down the council tax, ensuring public spending is controlled without mass redundancies and placating backbenchers from the south-east of England. All of this has had to be done after the environment department did rather badly out of the autumn statement.

To hold the council tax down, Mr Howard has attempted a pincer movement: tough limits on what each council will be able to spend next year, coupled with a small rise in central funding. Yesterday's figures show that most councils will be restricted to spending rises for next year of between about 0 and 3 per cent in cash on top of this year's budgets. If they exceed these figures, they risk capping.

The extra funding will come through grants and the national business rate. The trouble is that Mr Howard has been unable to get enough extra cash from the Treasury to be absolutely sure that the gap between (even capped) spending and central support is sufficient to avoid unacceptable council tax bills.

What you might ask is an unacceptable level of council tax? Luckily for the government the new tax does not have a single, easily disputed figure as a "target" or average. Ministers went to great trouble yesterday to avoid providing a hostage to fortune as they did when poll tax was introduced. At that time, an average figure of about £275 was mooted by ministers, though the real figure turned out at over £360. We all know how popular that turned out to be. The sole notional figure produced yesterday will allow few helpful comparisons to be made.

But for next year, ministers are happy to talk about a "real terms" fall in overall levels of local taxation. They are probably correct. There is a real chance that, because of the threat of capping, the amount collected from council tax next year will be less than was paid under the last and unlamented community charge. Thus, an average headline level of council tax of about £550 for band D properties, or rather less for the majority of people with band A, B and C properties, could mean cuts in local tax bills next year for most households.

The trouble for the government is that yesterday's announcement could not avoid a number of high-profile losers, particularly in the southern part of the country, where many people have properties in the

higher bands. Large numbers of articulate people living in average or bigger homes in outer London and the home counties may be about to take the view that their council tax bill is unacceptable.

True, Mr Howard announced a system of "transitional relief" which will help losing households. But the maximum losses allowed within the rules set — up to £1.75 per week in lowest band properties and as much as £3.50 per week in the highest band — will still leave many people worse off. As transitional support is removed, the misery will linger.

A fair number of losers will live in nice, Tory boroughs or counties for whom the severity of the spending limits set yesterday may prove just too much. No longer will the threat of "cuts" be restricted to wicked Labour authorities. If they are to avoid capping, most Conservative authorities will, like councils controlled by their higher-spending opponents, find themselves with little more to spend, in cash, next year than thus.

As a result, the round of crying wolf about cuts in local government, which normally reaches a peak about this time of year, could, for once, lead to a genuine round of savagery next spring.

The fear is that even with a public pay limit of around 1.5 per cent, local authorities will have to shed workers if they are to avoid capping. So real cuts must be on the cards for 1993, possibly by natural wastage, possibly with voluntary redundancies, but possibly requiring compulsory redundancies. Against a background of fast-rising unemployment and with increasing pessimism about growth, sackings would hardly help the government.

If schools start having to sack teachers, ministers would surely fear the political reaction. Now that opted-out and local authority schools are in the hands of governors and parents, small reductions in school budgets could lead to cuts in staff and to a massive political reaction. Pupil-teacher ratios are almost bound to worsen next year.

The government's announcement last night, though it may have made the best of a bad job, will not square the circle. Spending increases by councils will be tiny. Jobs will almost certainly go. Many people in the south-east will find their local council having to make "cuts" while local taxes rise. Council tax itself will be on trial.

The next stage in a long struggle will come in January when MPs vote on the details of the new figures. Anyone for a rebellion?

A timely bow to the taxman

The Queen's decision, says John Grigg, has come not a moment too soon

The Queen's speech on Monday at Guildhall was beyond question one of the most striking and memorable of her reign. Though necessarily read from a text, and with the added handicap of a heavy cold, it came across as more authentic and heartfelt than most of her speeches. Despite the occasional hint of self-pity, the prevalent tone was one of robust worldly wisdom, open-mindedness, even humility.

For the first time she conceded that the monarchy, like every other institution in a free country, must be open to criticism, and that reasonable criticism, if made "with a touch of gentleness, good humour and understanding", should be taken to heart. This sort of criticism could act, "and it should do so, as an effective engine for change". Well said, indeed — and now we know that for some months she has been intending to match deeds to words.

It is an unfortunate truth that, if the demand for change is too gentle, the engine is unlikely to spring into motion. Reason has to be reinforced by a head of steam in the form of political, press and above all popular opinion. Such a head of steam has recently existed. But it is vital that the engine should continue to move, and that opinion should not, therefore, be over-concentrated on a single issue, to the neglect of others that are equally, or more, important.

The issue that is now, perhaps, more or less settled is that of the royal finances. It was a serious issue, which should have been tackled long ago. Successive governments were culpably servile in not facing the implications of the Queen's tax immunity, and she was unwise to assume that their servility would guarantee the *status quo* (established by stealth within the present century) for the indefinite future. Her prime ministers, in particular, have served her ill in this matter.

It is not fair to blame her private secretaries or other courtiers, because they are exclusively her servants. Prime ministers are, of course, her servants too, at any rate in the formal sense, but above all they are our servants, elected by us and responsible, through Parliament, to us. Their dual role, and the rather strictly private audiences that they have with the sovereign, should enable them to influence her more than anyone else; and they surely have a duty to her, as well as to us, to exercise that influence. (She also has a right and a duty to influence them.)

When our politicians at last, under pressure from outside, turned their attention to the subject of royal finances, many of them showed how little previous thought they had given to it, and how half-baked their ideas consequently were. There was much silly talk of confining the civil list to the Queen



and the heir to the throne (who in any case has his own independent resources), and of cutting out the "moral rot". But in fact many of the latter are not provided for in the civil list, including some — the Kents and Gloucesters, for instance — who do much unobtrusive, but valuable, service to the state, and have a better right to receive civil list payments than some who at present do. The Queen is said to look after them now, as she will apparently in future be looking after most other members of the family.

It is good that the money question seems to have been resolved, and on the Queen's initiative. Any protracted wrangle over it would have been sordid and demeaning.

Meanwhile other no less urgent lessons should be drawn from the monarchy's latest *annus horribilis* (*one of many*, by the way, including some that have been far worse). The first is that the assumption which has as far largely governed recruitment of new members to the royal household, or indeed the royal family, during the present reign, has to be discarded once and for all.

The case for broadening the base of the Queen's official family, and whatever may be her actual family, is now overwhelming. The top echelons of the royal household must be made to reflect that totality of what the Queen herself represents. If the College of Cardinals has, during the past 40 years,

become truly catholic in composition, it is not too much to expect the royal household to undergo a similar evolution.

Those "friends" of the Princess of Wales who talked as they did to Andrew Morton, thereby showing an unbelievable disregard for the interests of the monarchy, to say nothing of the interests of the princess's children or her own true interests, were not from state schools or ethnic minorities or other countries of the Commonwealth. They came from just the sort of narrow, privileged British background that was thought to ensure discretion and loyalty. They were quintessential Sloanes, and it is Sloanes who have let the side down.

There also needs to be a change of routine, and a greater readiness to depart from routine in response to events. It may be too late now for the Queen to establish residences in other Commonwealth countries, though it is a pity she did not do so earlier in her reign, so that she could have spent in, say, Canada and Australia, some at least of the holiday time she has spent at Sandringham and Balmoral.

It is certainly not too late for the Prince of Wales to establish residences elsewhere in the Commonwealth — most suitable, perhaps, in his case, Australia and India — where he could make himself known and not just appear from time to time as a tourist. The royal family gives the impression of being too huddled together in this country.

As for departures from routine, the Queen has tended to avoid them as a matter of principle. Unscheduled gestures have been comparatively few, and the power of the monarchy to appeal to the imagination has, in this respect, been seriously under-used.

Might it not, for example, have been a fine gesture if she had visited in hospital the brave policeman who was shot while pursuing IRA terrorists, having helped to avert a terrible incident by stopping their van? In such a case a change of schedule on her part would have been more than justified.

If the Queen can move into higher rather than lower gear in the years ahead, her reign, already in so many ways good, may become even better.

As if that wasn't enough

NOT A GOOD week for Norman "the-cheque-is-in-the-post" Lamont. His position as Chancellor is under increasing threat after revelations of unpaid credit card bills. Now comes news that his job as an MP may be on the line. The Boundary Commission is expected to recommend next month that Lamont's Kingston upon Thames constituency should disappear.

The commission will publish proposals next month which are expected to lead to a major reorganisation of parliamentary boundaries. If implemented Lamont's constituency will be one of several which could be swallowed up.

Lamont, far from the most popular member of the government, might find it difficult to secure such a safe, alternative seat in the area. In April he polled double the number of votes of the next closest candidate.

The Chancellor's wards are expected to be moved into neighbouring Richmond and Barnes, a marginal seat, where Jeremy Hanley, a junior minister, is unlikely to make way for his more senior colleague. Hanley has defended the seat, which he originally won in

1983 against all the odds, from a strong Liberal Democrat challenge. He has an impressive local following.

Neighbouring Twickenham, another marginal seat, is also expected to benefit from the scrapping of Kingston, whose electoral roll of 51,000 makes it one of the smallest in the south-east. Tony Jessel, the Twickenham MP, is also unlikely to stand down without a fight, having held the seat since 1970.

Richard Tracey, the MP in the other adjoining seat, Surbiton, is confident he will not be dislodged by the Chancellor. Lamont will have to look further afield. Robert Waller, a polling expert with Harris Research group, says the prospects could be bleak: "It would make sense to do away with Kingston. Norman Lamont would either have to find another seat, which is not always easy, or move upstairs [to the Lords]."

John Major may not be too pleased by the commission's proposals either. It is expected to argue that 25,000 of the 93,000-strong electoral roll in his Huntingdon constituency be switched into a second Peterborough seat. At

present the prime minister boasts not only the largest constituency but also the biggest Tory majority: 36,230. Peter Brown, Major's agent, says: "We will not lose too much sleep over it."

It didn't take long. Scarcely had yesterday's disclosures about Norman Lamont's alleged non-payment of his Access bill broken than the fiscally challenged Chancellor had a new nickname. At yesterday morning's meeting of the standing committee of the employment Bill in the Commons, a Labour MP dubbed "my right honourable and flexible friend".

Mission man

PETER Jay's growing influence at the BBC has claimed a prominent casualty. Dominic Harrod, the

veteran BBC Radio economics editor, is to lose his post in an internal shake-up. Jay, BBC television economics editor and a long-time friend of John Birt, director-general designate, will assume Harrod's radio duties.

Harrod, who was a key figure on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme, is reportedly dismayed by losing the job he has held for 13 years. A BBC spokeswoman said: "As far as I am aware Dominic Harrod is in discussions about resettlement. No firm decisions have been taken." Jay, former British ambassador to America under Jim Callaghan, then his father-in-law, will thus become one of the most influential men at the BBC.

Forward thinking

THE cultural exchanges between Britain and the former Yugoslavia continue apace. Greenlloyd, a firm of London architects repairing the historic Baltic Exchange building in the City, which was badly damaged by an IRA bomb, was surprised to receive a visit from a group of 17 Croatian architects this week. "They wanted to know how we deal with bomb-damaged historic buildings," says Warren Leyroy, a director of Greenlloyd. "There is rather a lot of work waiting for them when they get home."

As if that wasn't enough

DOMINIC LAWSON, the editor of the Spectator, has come under fire from Conrad Black, the proprietor. He was wrong, says Lawson, to have taken issue with the magazine's journalists over the American presidential election and Canary Wharf. Lawson says he has never heard before of a proprietor apologising in his own publication.

Redoubtable Baroness Trumper

THE redoubtable Baroness Trumper, the chain-smoking government whip in the House of Lords, was in fine form at The Spectator parliamentarian of the year award at the Savoy Hotel on Wednesday. Trumper had not long returned from opening an animal artificial insemination centre in the village of Whitchurch in Sussex. "Don't be misled into thinking it's

pronounced wily. It's Willy," she boomed at the startled guests.

L'etat, c'est Moët

VIVE la difference. While parliament is calling the Queen to account for every last penny provided by the taxpayer for the state-owned royal palaces, the French are taking an altogether different approach to

the refurbishment of the palace of Versailles.

The French see it as an honour to be associated with the maintenance of their national heritage. Moët & Chandon, the champagne company, which is owned by the French group Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy, is celebrating its 250th anniversary by paying for the restoration of the African and Crimean suites at Versailles at a cost of millions of francs. Guiness, which has a sizeable stake in LVMH, will indirectly help to finance the work.

Indeed, such is the pomp surrounding the affair that Moët plans to throw a lavish banquet for 250, including Jack Lang, France's minister for education and culture, at Versailles on Monday.

THE ROYAL

SILVER



THE ROYAL TAXMAN

Concessions by the Queen should heal the wounds of Windsor

Sensitivity and political skill are required from all sides if the tax changes for the royal family announced yesterday are to bring as much good as their initiators hope. The resentment following the Windsor fire has still to subside. If it does, the premature unveiling of the Treasury's work-in-progress on royal taxation may be beneficial. Changes which were initiated earlier this year and due to be made in the usual secrecy will be finalised instead under a more public scrutiny. Their acceptability may thus be the greater. If, however, the ugliest elements of recent months predominate, if the mood of bitterness has pervaded so much of the media is maintained; then the government will have created only a charter for the jealous and the curious.

The reforms as revealed so far are small ones. For the Queen and her household the *annus* of 1992 may have been horrific; but the *dies* in 1993 on which the Queen pays her new taxes will not be. Yesterday's answer by the prime minister at question time should give no immediate encouragement to those who want a miniature monarchy. Princes will not be forced onto bicycles. The new arrangements will be voluntary. No laws are to be passed that would require Her Majesty to pay.

The modest aim is clear. Most minor members of royalty, those whose behaviour has brought the Crown into a degree of disrepute, will next year not be funded directly from taxation but will have their monies supplied through the Queen's own purse. The monarch is thereby increasing

her control over some who have been her more unruly subjects.

For her own part the Queen will pay tax on that part of her income deemed to be private. There will be much scope for manoeuvring here. The professed aim is to treat the monarchy as far as possible as a business, with a defined business purpose. The bounds of possibility in such definitions are elastic. There is little done by the Queen that is not in some respect demanded by her public position. Her tax inspector can expect no rich pickings.

Nor does this government expect them. Yesterday's announcement was not a promise of greater equity in revenue-raising, still less a drive to fund Northern Line improvements from the recesses of the privy purse. It was a response to a chasm of distrust that has been dug between people and palace by junior royalty and competitive newspapers.

The Queen has shown that she realises her political problem. The politicians have realised that, if they stick together in helping the monarch, they may all avoid the dangers of storms that none of them can predict.

Risks lie in the new procedures, none the less. Although the announcement met a generally favourable response yesterday, it is not likely to still all the monarchy's critics. Distinctions between public and private expenses will legitimise enquiries into areas that have hitherto been out of bounds to the curious. There are still some virtues in a monarch being different from the rest of us. It would be a pity if we recognised them only when they had gone.

PRE-DAWN MANOEUVRES

Boris Yeltsin needs Western understanding of his vulnerability

The forces of reaction, a thousand strong, descend on Moscow next Tuesday. Since October 20, when Boris Yeltsin lost his battle with the Russian parliament to defer until next spring the convening of the Congress of People's Deputies, all his considerable political guile has been devoted to building political defences against these ghosts of communism past. He needs defences: the congress may be a political throwback, but it has wide constitutional powers, including power to dismiss the government. Yet his strategy, which appears to be to join with his conservative critics against the congress's diehard opponents of capitalism and political pluralism, is still not securely in place.

On Monday, the Russian president appeared to have secured a truce, at least, with the Civic Union, a powerful alliance of industrial overlords, segments of the military and politicians who claim to support reform in principle, but only if the government dilutes the radicalism of its faltering programme. A few heads rolled in the second rank of Mr Yeltsin's ministers and advisers, and there was talk of concessions to Civic Union demands for more aggressive state management of the transition to a market economy and, crucially, generous new subsidies for ailing state enterprises.

Yesterday, this marriage of convenience appeared to dissolve. Seemingly with Mr Yeltsin's backing, Yegor Gaidar, the avowedly radical acting prime minister, flatly rejected four central Civic Union demands. There would be no return to the old system of state procurement and distribution, no price and wages freeze and the government would block the 1000 billion roubles in fresh credits to industry promised by the governor of Russia's central bank earlier this month.

Reality lies somewhere inbetween. The positions of Mr Yeltsin and Arkady Volksy, the most formidable of his Civic Union critics, have been drawing closer for some weeks. Mr Yeltsin has even paid tribute to the alliance as a basis for "a modern, civilised two-party system"; Mr Volksy has insisted that he is no supporter of authoritarianism.

But they have yet to agree on terms. The larger role for the state in "the formation of market relations" agreed on Monday is a wonderfully vague formula. Mr Yeltsin is struggling against demands to flesh that out with specific commitments which would limit his freedom of manoeuvre. But he is aware that public support for reform is wavering just as the going is about to get tougher. With production continuing to fall, Civic Union strikes a chord with ordinary workers when it accuses the government of destroying Russian industry.

If the pace of reform slows, the West

should be understanding. Monetary stability, however vital, is probably unattainable without a payments union with other trouble-making republics. A convertible rouble may have to wait on the establishment of such basics of a free market as fiscal reforms and new commercial and property laws. Even Western governments are poor at picking winners in industry; the Russian government is likely to be worse. But selective state subsidy may be the only alternative to unacceptable levels of unemployment.

The government has scored some successes, such as price liberalisation, on which Mr Yeltsin should stand firm. But before it takes the huge step of exposing the really big state enterprises to the market, the government needs to find money for millions who would then be thrown out of jobs.

Russia has an admirable social security system, which keeps redundant workers on full pay for three months and ensures that no long-term unemployed receive less than the equivalent of the minimum wage. But without foreign support, the government would be hard put to finance it once unemployment rises from less than 2 per cent, as now, to five or ten times that figure.

Mr Yeltsin's popularity has survived the fall in living standards; it would not survive downright penury. Mr Yeltsin is relying on his wits to see him through the congress. The West should think hard about helping him address the fears of economic collapse which render him vulnerable in the longer term.

A FAIRER DEAL

The new council tax deserves to survive

The poll tax was widely criticised for being unfair, even in Tory ranks. That a duke should pay as little as a dustman ran against every tenet of social justice. Now, with the new council tax, Conservative MPs are protesting afresh. The duke will pay more than the dustman — and the duke, of course, a Tory voter living in a Tory constituency.

Logic is rarely the victor where politics are concerned. While the duke's council tax bill will undoubtedly be greater than his poll tax, it will still be smaller than it would have been under the old rating system. The council tax, although bandied according to the value of the property, is artificially squeezed. Those in the highest band will pay no more than three times those in the lowest band.

This mild inequity is already a sop to the Tory faithful. They should remember that the poll tax had to be replaced because the public — including many people who gained from the flat-rate tax — would not stand for it. What many Tory MPs failed to realise at the time was that the poll tax was a tax on Labour voters: the poor were penalised at the expense of the rich. Inevitably any fairer successor to the poll tax was going to look like a tax on Conservative voters.

Now these MPs are faced with anger from their constituents who, in the depths of recession and with the value of their houses falling faster than elsewhere in the country, will have to find the money to pay higher bills. Had the débâcle of the poll tax never

Clerical dress

From the Reverend Dr G. A. Hodge

Sir, The Reverend Michael Northwood (letter November 23) raised an important issue about hats which lady aspirants to the priesthood should study. The correct clerical hat for liturgical wear (inside a church) is a "biretta". These come in a nice black for priests and purple for a bishop. If you are ambitious they come in stiff ottoman silk, and those worn by the holder of a PhD can have four "wings" rather than three.

Also available is a "zucchetto", a

Teaching standards

From Professor Edward C. Wragg

Sir, In her ill-informed snipe at state education (article, November 17) Janet Daley refers to me as the "godfather of progressivism", whatever that may be, and then attacks a stereotype which bears no resemblance at all to my views or those of most teachers.

Her assertion that teachers do not believe in structure or the imparting of knowledge is utter bunk. I have constantly stressed the importance of knowledge, often quoting the example of surgeons, at the pinnacle of human achievement, who need knowledge, skills and understanding.

Indeed, my most recent research project has been precisely on the topics of subject knowledge and teachers' explaining strategies, as she would have known had she read properly the set of papers *Education: Putting the Record Straight*, which she mentions in her article.

Nor is she right to assert, without evidence, that standards amongst 11-year-olds were "dropping alarmingly" in the eighties. The government's own monitoring of thousands of primary school-leavers from 1984 to 1988, for example, showed that in mathematics, standards rose in four of five areas tested, namely measures, geometry, algebra and probability/statistics.

Yours faithfully,

E. C. WRAGG
(Director), School of Education,
University of Exeter,
Heavitree Road, Exeter, Devon.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 071-782 5000

Fresh thoughts on castle rebuilding

From the Editor of The Architects' Journal

Sir, Windsor Castle is an icon, and monarchy employs symbolism and seeming magic. This was understood by the Queen's predecessors, who constantly altered and enlarged the castle in serving that need. They reinterpreted the myth in a manner appropriate to their age and their own tastes.

There are suitable cases for replication. This is not one of them. We should not demolish what stands but neither should we be grubbing in the cinders of nineteenth-century interventions in the myth-making process, replacing what are fakes anyway. Instead, we should add another layer to an unfolding history in order to express the art and spirit of our times.

This is not a question of demolition and rebuilding, but of making interventions in the remaining fabric in a manner that respects existing materials. To take just one example: modern methods of production and installation allow glass to be used architecturally on a scale and with a subtlety which would be the envy of the nineteenth-century pioneers, like Paxton, architect of the Crystal Palace.

Modern British architects as diverse as Michael Hopkins, Sir Norman Foster, Richard McCormac and William Whitfield have shown how old and loved buildings can be added to and enhanced — in locations as diverse as the old Financial Times building, the Royal Academy of Arts, Trinity College, Cambridge, and Whitehall.

But we can go one step further and consider the more radical proposition of changing Windsor Castle's role into something more than a royal residence and a venue for state occasions: it could also become a major international museum of art.

Architectural interventions at the Louvre and the Smithsonian have turned them into museums which will respond to the demands of tourism and scholarship well into the next century. No British museum compares.

At Windsor, money and time saved on painstaking post-war reconstruction and building detective work could be used to fill the new structures with modern works of art and craft. Artists, furniture makers, sculptors, glass engravers, interior and lighting designers, carpet and tapestry makers and other specialists could join architects in a festival of design and building that would involve the nation.

People queued to see the new South Bank exhibition during the Festival of Britain, and later the new Coventry cathedral. It's not happened since it could if the Queen and her government had the courage to be patrons, not pasticheurs, and transformed Windsor Castle into one of the great museums of the world.

Yours sincerely,
STEPHEN GREENBERG,
Editor,
The Architects' Journal,
33-39 Bowring Green Lane, EC1.

November 25.

From Dr J. M. Wober

Sir, The High Court is now, sadly, dividing the nation, the royal restorationists being opposed by the penny-pinching egalitarians. I have seen little creative thought about how people can benefit from this sad event.

There should first be an architectural competition to determine how the restoration should be made. Options should include a wholly new design for the destroyed parts, a wholly faithful replica of the previous structure, or mixtures between the two such as a modern core with a traditional cladding. To win such a competition would be a major prize for any competing company and the winner might pay (not receive) a privilege fee of, say, £1 million.

Yours sincerely,
MALCOLM WOBER,
17 Lancaster Grove, NW3.
November 24.

From Mr Michael Manser

Sir, There are three ways of rebuilding the affected parts of Windsor Castle. The burnt sections can be accurately replicated (but that would be very expensive); or the interiors and exterior could be recreated as an accurate, thin-skin pastiche supported by economical, light-construction methods; or what reparable could be repaired and the rest replaced.

The third of those options has a different kind of veracity and would continue the castle's tradition of evolution and change. It is not an option for the camions, however, because it involves new design and carries the risk of aesthetic failure.

A cautionary tale is that of Uppark, in West Sussex, the great house most recently destroyed by fire (September 1989). It had an exquisitely delicate elegance, redolent of the passage of generations of occupants, and it was one of our most sublime treasures from the late seventeenth century. No effort or expense has been spared in a (now unsatisfactory) faithful reconstruction, but Uppark now is now what Uppark was — a work of art executed at a point in time.

The when and how is a part of the whole. Art cannot be recreated. A Holbein picture lost in a fire could be faithfully reproduced and become almost indistinguishable from the original, but few would suggest it be done or that it would then be the peer of the original.

Buildings, however, have an enormous construction cost. Can that cost be justified if the building is not going to be as before? And if it never can be the same, perhaps a realistic compromise is to settle for good pastiche supported by low-cost background construction. Such a solution has an ironic wry honesty of its own. Even better, repair and replace.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL MANSER,
Manser Associates (architects),
Bridge Studios,
Hammersmith Bridge, W6.
November 23.

Refugees from Bosnia

From Ms Sally Trench

Sir, Last September, before the introduction of visas, the charity Project Spark welcomed a group of 15 Bosnian children to our home in Oxfordshire. Fortunately, after 20 years working with disadvantaged children, we had just opened a children's home registered under the Department of Health.

The stories of these innocent children compete with those of the Nazis' extermination of the Jews — of parents being locked in deep freezes and fathers being found dead in cement mowers.

Now we have a further dozen children between the ages of five and 12 in a refugee camp in Split, living in summer clothes in below-zero temperatures and appalling conditions, unable to move because British bureaucracy has gone mad. I am going there on Sunday to try to bring them out.

These children will not be a burden on the state. They are too young to claim political asylum; they are too young to add to the unemployment figures or claim benefits and we have provision enough to support them without having to make demands on the social services.

Surely it is every child's birthright to be given love and security. The introduction of visas for child refugees from Bosnia denies this basic human right.

Yours sincerely,

SALLY TRENCH
(Director), Project Spark,
Orchard House, Church Lane,
Wendlebury,
Nr Bicester, Oxfordshire.

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Life and death in Tony Bland case

From the Archbishop of Glasgow

Sir, The High Court has declared the lawfulness of withdrawing tube-feeding on the ground that continuing it was not in Mr Tony Bland's "best interests". According to your own reading of the judgment (leading article, November 20) the main factor influencing the determination of Mr Bland's "best interests" was the judge's sympathy for the view that his life lacked dignity and meaning.

Any such view would indeed imply that Mr Bland would be better off dead, and would suggest that the object of withdrawing tube-feeding is to end his life. On this interpretation of "best interests", what is being justified is intentional killing by starvation.

The judgment provides no grounds for rejecting this interpretation of it. Indeed it is remarkable that Sir Stephen Brown said nothing to rebut the Official Solicitor's argument that the choice to withdraw tube-feeding was a choice intentionally to bring about death.

The High Court judgment is therefore deeply unsatisfactory. It is essential for the protection of all vulnerable patients that the Appeal Court should reconsider the issues in a way clearly consistent with recognising that every innocent human being, however deprived and debilitated, enjoys a basic right not to be intentionally killed.

To make such a right seem to depend on the enjoyment of a particular quality of life would be to abandon justice in the care of patients for arbitrariness and convenience.

Yours sincerely,
THOMAS J. WINNING
(Chairman, joint bioethics committee,
Catholic Bishops of England and
Wales, Scotland and Ireland),
Curial Offices,
196 Clyde Street, Glasgow 1.
November 24.

From Mr Luke Gormally

Sir, Tube-feeding of Tony Bland can continue to serve the normal purpose of taking food. So the reason for withdrawing it seems to be the judgment that it is a "benefit" to put an end to his present condition. Why, then, is the planned withdrawal not to be characterised as murder by intentionality?

Why, furthermore, is the manifestly living Tony Bland judged no longer to have a "human life"? The short answer seems to be, because nothing of value is going on in his head. But there are surely many other human beings (not all of them in a persistent vegetative state) of whom the same might be said.

The right not to be murdered, like other basic rights, belongs to human beings just because of the ineliminable dignity and value which attaches

to their humanity, not because of any distinctive value attaching to activities of which they may or may not be capable.

If the Appeal Court does not face the issues raised by the Tony Bland case in a way that is consistent with recognising the inviolability of innocent human life but merely endorses the High Court judgment, then the judiciary will seem to have accommodated the classic contention of proponents of non-voluntary eugenic euthanasia: one may intentionally kill those judged to lack worthwhile lives.

Procedural provisions will be no help in the long term against the working out of the logic of that principle.

Yours sincerely,

LUKE GORMALLY
(Director), The Linacre Centre,
60 Grove End Road, NW8.

From Dr Michael J. Powers

Sir, The terms of the declaration of the High Court in the Tony Bland case (Law Report, November 23) are that the court would declare that the health authority and the responsible physician "may lawfully discontinue all life-sustaining treatment and medical support measures designed to keep Anthony Bland alive... and they may lawfully discontinue and thereafter need not furnish medical treatment him except for the sole purpose of enabling Anthony Bland to end his life and to die peacefully with the greatest dignity and the least distress" (emphasis added).

Whilst the declaration may not purport



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

November 26: The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, this afternoon presented the prizes to the winners of the Royal Armchair Trust's National Awards of St James's Palace.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness received by the Chairman of the Trust (the Lord Younger of Prestwich) and Mr Robin Gill (Trustee).

The Lady Farnham, the Rt Hon Sir Robert Fellowes and Major James Patrick were in attendance.

The Duke of Edinburgh, President, today attended a luncheon given by the British Sports Trust at Grosvenor Bridge House, London SW1.

Wing Commander Christopher Morris, RAF, was in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

November 26: The Duke of York this evening presented the prizes at the Trophies and Awards Banquet of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators at the Plaisterers' Hall, London EC2.

Captain Neil Blair, RN, was in attendance.

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BUCKINGHAM PALACE

November 26: The Prince Edward, Chairman of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Special Projects Group, this evening attended the "Magnificent Seven" dinner at the Hyatt Carlton Tower, Cadogan Place, London SW1.

Lieutenant Colonel Sean O'Dwyer was in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

November 26: The Prince Royal, Chief Commandant, Women's Royal Naval Service, today visited HMS *Inincible* at sea off the southwest coast, and was received by the Commander United Kingdom Task Group (Rear Admiral John Brigstocke) and the Flag Captain (Captain Fabian Malbon, RN).

CLARENCE HOUSE

November 26: Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Amiot today had the honour of being received by Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother.

Colonel-in-Chief, The King's Regiment, upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer of the 5th/5th Battalion TA.

BIRTHDAYS today

Mr John Alderton, actor, 52; Dr John Ashworth, director, London School of Economics and Political Science, 54; Mr Rowan Bentall, president, Bentalls, 81; Mr Rodney Bewes, actor, 55; Lord Bridges, 65; the Rev Dr Edward Carpenter, former Dean of Westminster, 82; the Earl of Cottingham, 44; Mrs Robert Douglas, broadcaster, 79; Air Marshal Sir Eric Dunn, 65; Mr James Evans, former chairman, International Thomson Organisation, 60; Lord Howard de Walden, 80; Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Howard-Yeats, 87; Miss Verity Lambert, film and TV producer, 57; the Marquess of Lansdowne, 80; Baroness Mallalieu, QC, 47; Sir David Nicolson, chairman, Clydesdale Bank, 63; Mr Leslie Preston, architect, 65; Mr Alan Simpson, scriptwriter, 63; Mr Ernie Wise, comedian, 67.

Appointment

Sir Harold Walker to be a member of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in succession to Sir Derek Day.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Anders Celsius, astronomer, inventor of the centigrade thermometer, Uppsala, Sweden, 1701; Robert Lovell, clergyman, Winchester, 1710; John Murray, publisher, London, 1778; Pauley Kemble, actress, London, 1809; Sir Charles Sherrington, physiologist, Nobel laureate, 1932; London, 1857; Jules Pasilis, President of Finland, 1946-56; Tampera, 1870; Chaim Weizmann, biochemist, first President of Israel, 1949-52; Minsk, Russia, 1874; Jimi Hendrix, rock guitarist, Seattle, Washington, 1942.

DEATHS: Jacopo Sansovino, sculptor, Venice, 1570; Sir John Eliot, parliamentarian, London, 1632; Alexander Dumas the Younger, dramatist and poet, Paris, 1895; Tom Walls, actor-producer, Ewell, Surrey, 1949; Eugene O'Neill, dramatist, Nobel laureate 1936, Boston, Massachusetts, 1953; Arthur Horrocks, composer, Paris, 1955.

William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, 1582.

Two priests, the first to be granted official status in Britain, reported for duty at Grantham, Lincolnshire, 1914.

Today's royal engagements

Princess Margaret, as President of the NSPCC, will open the Devon Child Protection Team's building in Mamhead Road, Plymouth, at 3.30; and will attend a gala performance of *Buddy* at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, at 8.00 in aid of King George's Fund for Sailors.

The Duchess of Kent, as Patron of the Yelms Menin School, will visit the school at Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey, at 11.30.

The Duchess of Kent, as Deputy Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Dragoon Guards, will attend the Officers' regimental dinner at the Cavalry and Guards Club at 7.45.

Luncheons

National Sporting Club

Mr David Mellor, QC, MP, was the guest speaker at a luncheon of the National Sporting Club held yesterday at the Café Royal. Mr Bob Willis, chairman, presided.

The Park Tower Luncheon Club

The Park Tower Luncheon Club held a luncheon yesterday in Restaurant 101, Park Tower Hotel. The Sheraton Park Tower Hotel, Mr Derek Pirot, General Manager, and Miss Jacqueline McCourt were the hosts and the guests were Miss Anna Myskow, Miss Annabel Craft, Mr Peter Charlewood, Miss Lorraine Chase, Mr Charlie Parsons, Miss Fiona Fullerton, Mr Mel Calman, the Hon Caroline Parry, Mr Frazer Hines and the Hon Greville Janier, QC, MP.

Reception

West Africa Committee

Mr AJ Shelia, Chairman of the West Africa Committee, was host at a reception held last night at the Army and Navy Club for committee members and members of the Diplomatic Corps.

Arnold School

The Governing Council of Arnold School, Blackpool, has appointed Mr W.T. Gillen, Headmaster of The King's School, Tynemouth, to be Headmaster of Arnold School in September 1993.

HM Government

Mr Allan Stewart, Minister for Industry at the Scottish Office, was host last night at a dinner held in Edinburgh Castle for delegates attending the Comet Conference for pilot projects.

Caledonian Club

The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, KT, was the guest of honour at the annual St Andrews' Day dinner held last night at the Caledonian Club. Lord Ramsay, president, was the chair.

RN College Greenwich

Lord Howe of Aberavon, QC, was the guest of honour at the annual dinner of the Royal Naval Baristers held last night at the Royal Naval College Greenwich. Captain J.F.T. Bayliss, Chief Naval Judge Advocate, presided. Among those present were:

Admiral Sir Michael Livesey, Judge Water, QC; Rear-Admiral N.J. Wilkinson, QC, and Commodore R.F. G. Ward.

Bahrain Society

The annual dinner of the Bahrain Society was held last night at the St James's Court Hotel, Westminster. The guests were received by the president, the Ambassador of Bahrain, and the chairman, by the chairman, Mr Peter Keay, MP, Dr J. Henning, Director and Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, Mr C.J. Burnet.

CHAPPELL

On November 25th, 1992, Robert Palmer, son of the late Christopher, greatly missed and loved by his wife, Barbara, and their two sons, Robert and Christopher, died suddenly at his home in the British Heart Foundation.

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OBITUARIES

SIR HUGH WONTNER

Sir Hugh (Walter Kingwell) Wontner, GBE, CVO, president and former chairman and managing director of the Savoy hotel group, Clerk of the Royal Kitchens and a former Lord Mayor of London, died on November 25 aged 84. He was born on October 22, 1908.

FOR MORE than three decades Hugh Wontner presided with dramatic flair, over four of Europe's most illustrious hotels — the Savoy, Claridges, the Berkeley and the Connaught — with an unashamed commitment to excellence, style and luxury, regardless of the cost. In doing so he ensured that his hotels attracted the most prestigious clientele and remained London landmarks as famous as Nelson's Column and Buckingham Palace. He also beat off attempted take-overs from Sir Charles Clore, Harold Samuel, Victor Matthews of Trafalgar House, Sir Maxwell Joseph of Grand Metropolitan and — the most persistent of all — Lord Forte whose marathon efforts lasted eight years and have still not ended.

Wontner's business philosophy was that standards should never be compromised simply for an extra penny of profit. The Savoy, he said, could satisfy every whim of the most exacting guest as satisfactorily at 4 am as at 4 pm. There were always enough rich people, he argued, willing to pay for the best.

The success of this strategy was effectively summed up, during the heat of Lord Forte's campaign to gain control of the Savoy, by a letter writer to *The Times*:

"I have never had to carry my own luggage at the Savoy, which is more than can be said for Trusthouse Forte."

Hugh Walter Kingwell Wontner was the son of a distinguished actor, Arthur Wontner. His mother was an actress but gave up the stage when her three children were born. Home was in Bedford Park, Chiswick, and then Regent's Park. Wontner was educated at Oundle and in France but was not, he said later, an academic pupil. On his return to London, not yet 20, he joined the secretarial staff of the London Chamber of Commerce. In 1933, at the age of 25, he was appointed general secretary of the Hotels and Restaurants Association of Great Britain.

It was in that position — and as secretary of the Coronation Accommodation Committee, set up by the London hotels to cope with the rash of bookings at the time of George VI's coronation — that Wontner came to the attention of George (later Sir George) Reeves-Smith, who had been managing director of the Savoy group since 1900.

Reeves-Smith was impressed by Wontner's administrative abilities. But the young man had other qualities which also appealed to the veteran managing director: a discerning palate for wines, a taste for travel, and a consuming passion for the theatre. To Reeves-Smith, whose own brother Harry was a fine actor and whose hotel had been founded by and was still closely associated with the D'Oyly Carte family, Wontner must have seemed ideal Savoy material. In 1938 he invited Wontner to join the group as his assistant.

Wontner came to the Savoy at an exciting time. War was looming and



Front of house at the Savoy: Sir Hugh Wontner and his commissioner

the elegant lines of the public rooms were being obscured by steel girders and sandbags. Staff were doing double duty as air-raid wardens and nurses. Soon the hotel's air-raid facilities were in greater demand than its suites and as the war progressed the chefs laid aside steak tartare and began to improvise with spanner and dried eggs.

Throughout this period Wontner remained as imperturbable as his mentor, Reeves-Smith, and the two of them strained every nerve to ensure that, even in the most difficult circumstances, the hotel should offer its guests efficiency, courtesy and as much comfort as it could muster.

In May 1941 Reeves-Smith died at the age of 86. When Rupert D'Oyly Carte, the Savoy chairman, came to look for a replacement for the man who had guided the group's fortunes for more than 40 years, he had no doubts about the succession. He appointed the 32-year-old Wontner as managing director.

The prospects for the Savoy looked bleak when the new managing director took over. Bookings were sparse and many of the key personnel were in the services. But this slack period did not last long. When America entered the war business picked up sharply as officers, diplomats, trade officials and journalists had to cope for some years with the five shilling limit on the price of a meal.

The Savoy had its own particular problems, not least the extensive damage sustained during hostilities. But Wontner was determined to return the hotel fast to its former glory, for he could see that in the post-war years the capital would become a magnet for foreign visitors, especially Americans. The group invested heavily in repairing the war damage and in re-equipping and re-stocking both the Savoy and the other major hotels, the Berkeley and Claridges, which it owned.

Wontner made himself indispensable during this period and in 1947, on the death of the chairman, Rupert D'Oyly Carte, the board appointed Hugh Wontner to the post. He was the first person to fulfil the dual roles of chairman and managing director since Richard D'Oyly Carte, Rupert's father.

Under his delicate control Claridges became a home in London for numerous statesmen, from President Truman and King Husain to Gandhi, while the Savoy attracted such showbusiness stars as Frank Sinatra and Sophia Loren.

During the next three decades Wontner led the group through a period of consolidation and expansion: in 1956 he purchased the Connaught and in the early 1960s decided to move the Berkeley. When

the new Berkeley eventually opened in Knightsbridge in 1972 Wontner was immensely proud of his handiwork, describing it — perhaps controversially — as the last really de-luxe hotel to be built in Europe. He was careful to achieve a size somewhere between going over into mass production and being so small that it would be impossible to make money.

Wontner resisted several attempts to persuade him to expand the Savoy group internationally on the grounds that with such expansion the group's commitment to quality might suffer.

The original Berkeley was at the centre of the first major takeover bid faced by Wontner, who over the years was to prove himself resourceful and cunning at fighting off such unwelcome approaches.

In 1953 the entrepreneur Charles Clore began buying shares in the Savoy which he then sold to Harold Samuel, the property tycoon. When a Board of Trade enquiry revealed that it was Samuel who was building up a stake in the group Wontner guessed that his real target was not the Savoy itself but the Berkeley, whose Piccadilly site would make a remarkable acquisition for the property developer.

Wontner devised a simple but effective defence. He transferred control of the freehold of the Berkeley to the Savoy Staff Benevolent Fund, making it virtually impossible to acquire the hotel soon backed off and offered his shares to Wontner. The freehold was then transferred back to the Savoy and subsequently sold at a large profit, the proceeds being used to finance the new Berkeley in Knightsbridge.

Wontner changed the share structure of the group in 1955 in an effort to fend off further bids, but this did not stop several groups making

attempts. He successfully fought off Trafalgar House in the early seventies and almost a decade later engaged in a furious battle with Sir Charles Forte, whose Trusthouse Forte group made several, acrimonious and unsuccessful raids on the Savoy. Wontner, at 6 ft 1 in was not averse to enjoying the comparison of size in his battle with the diminutive Charles Forte.

During these take-over battles, Wontner was adept at deflecting criticism of the group's financial performance, pointing out that, in nearly a century, there had been only five years when the group had not made a profit.

THF eventually gained 69 per cent of the Savoy's equity but only 42 per cent of voting rights. As a result, a legal settlement was reached three years ago, under which the Savoy consented to give Lord Forte's son Rocco, chief executive of Trusthouse Forte, and Donald Main, its finance director, seats on the main board in return for which it undertook not to buy any more shares in the Savoy for at least five years.

A year before this settlement, Wontner stepped down from his position of chairman and managing director but remained as president of the Savoy group.

Throughout his career Hugh Wontner was admired by business associates for his acumen, integrity and loyalty while being accused by his critics of aloofness and arrogance. Beneath a genial manner there certainly lay steely determination and a fair degree of ruthlessness. He admired the aloofness which, he said, probably stemmed from the fact that he preferred the company of women to men. He had no close male friends, he said, and found the softer approach of women more congenial.

Wontner was closely associated with the Royal Household over many years. He was appointed a Catering Adviser in 1938 and in 1953 was appointed Clerk of the Royal Kitchens, a post which was revived specially for him, having lapsed in the early days of Queen Victoria's reign.

Like his predecessor, Reeves-Smith, Hugh Wontner always looked at home in formal or ceremonial garb, and he had more opportunities than most to don it, being a member of several livery companies, the recipient of a string of foreign orders, and the holder of a number of distinguished offices in the City of London, most notably that of Lord Mayor in 1973-74.

But perhaps the group of which he was most proud of being a member was The Old Stagers, the world's oldest amateur dramatic society, to which he was elected in 1937 and in which he was still playing an active part more than forty years later.

His devotion to the Savoy Theatre, its bricks and mortar, its decor and what played on stage, was complete.

He was chairman and managing director of the theatre from 1948. He was devastated when it burnt down in 1990 and personally supervised its reconstruction. The recent topping-out ceremony, conducted by Prince Edward, gave him immense pleasure and only a few days before his death he was talking about presiding over the re-opening next year.

Hugh Wontner was knighted in 1972. He is survived by his wife Catherine, two sons and a daughter.

KATHLEEN HILL

Kathleen Hill, MBE, Winston Churchill's secretary during the second world war and later, for 23 years, the curator of Chequers died on November 16 aged 92. She was born on August 20, 1900.

THROUGHOUT nine of the most crucial years in British history, Kathleen Hill sat close to the heart of power and government. Yet she died with her store of secrets still intact. She was the model of model secretaries.

She was at Churchill's side at times of triumph and disaster: when he replaced Neville Chamberlain at 10 Downing Street; at the time of the allied victory in Europe; and when he lost the 1945 General Election. She was with him on early visits to President Roosevelt, her notebooks and typewriter at the ready.

She remained in later years as his evident distress on hearing that the battleship *Prince of Wales* had been sunk in the Far East and graphically described the "buzzing" atmosphere whenever the great man was in full flow.

She took dictation from him in his car, while he paced up and down his war-time bunker — and even in his bedroom — where she would sit at the foot of his bed, a typewriter on her knee. She typed some of the most famous speeches in the language, on at least one occasion while Churchill was on his feet in the House of Commons, the pages being passed forward to him as he spoke. Her shorthand and her typing were impeccable and Churchill never troubled to check her copy — though he dictated at great speed.

Yet the woman who knew so much never kept a diary or tried to capitalise upon her memories. She divulged only the most trivial information — and usually only to set the record straight after some journalist or historian had erred. Her reward for such professional discretion was that Winston Churchill trusted her implicitly.

Kathleen Hill's job came through a secretarial agency.

An accomplished violinist, who had made broadcasts and played in public, she had hoped to be given a post in a girl's school, where she could make an input to its musical curriculum. She never regretted, however, the chance decision which took her to a Chartwell and changed the future course of her life.

She was born Kathleen Spratt in Portsmouth, where her father worked for the Royal Navy in Portsmouth dockyard. She began work there as a 17-year-old secretary in the first world war, developing the skills which were later to take her to the top. But she left for India after the war was over, to marry George Hill, an official of the Bengal-Nagpur railway. Their

wedding which took place, despite opposition from their families, was held in Bombay cathedral in 1924. The new Mrs Hill became a Girl Guide district commissioner and subsequently took a job as secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Girl Guides in All India, Lady Linlithgow.

Her marriage ended unhappily, however, and she returned to this country where she began working for Churchill in 1937. Based at Chartwell, she was chiefly involved, at first, in Churchill's journal and literary life.

She later moved with him to Downing Street as his personal private secretary, heading a team of three who worked a shift system during the war, sleeping and working in Downing Street itself or its so-called annex.

Following Churchill's defeat in the 1945 General Election, however, the curator at Chequers retired and she was offered the job by the Chequers Trust. She accepted, commenting to friends that one could be a secretary for too long, and spent the next 23



years running the Prime Minister's official country residence for six more holders of the office. The six included Churchill in the early 1950s, though as he normally continued to use Chartwell, he gave her and her staff (traditional drawn from the three services) an easy time.

To all of them, from Clement Attlee to Harold Wilson, before her retirement in 1969, she devoted the same qualities of loyalty, efficiency and discretion. Her signed photographs of all of Britain's prime ministers over a period of 30 years must be among the rarest collections of that kind.

But her signed copies of all Churchill's books were sold in Sotheby's earlier this year when she had to enter a nursing home after a fall.

Her former husband inherited a Cromwellian baronetcy 12 years ago, becoming Sir George Hill, 9th Bt. Their son Richard was made the 10th baronet on his father's death, but he died last March and Mrs Hill is survived by two grand-daughters.

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THE TIMES TODAY

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27 1992

NEWS

Queen agrees to pay income tax

■ The Queen is to start paying income tax on her private fortune and to finance Civil List payments to her children and sister. She will also pay council tax on her homes at Balmoral and Sandringham.

John Major made the announcement that the sovereign was relinquishing a 55-year-old exemption from tax liability in the Commons, many of whose members have been agitating for a reduction in royal privilege. Pages 1, 3

Council tax bills of up to £1,000

■ Council tax bills of £1,000 per household for the most expensive properties in England were signposted by Michael Howard, the environment secretary, as the government made clear that it was giving town halls one last chance to make a system of local taxation work. Page 1

EC budget row

Britain will propose in Brussels today a significant reduction in European Community spending. Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, has sought to increase the Community's budget to £64.5 billion by 1999, but Britain wants to cut this by £4 billion before the Edinburgh summit. Pages 1, 10, 11

Labour advance

The Irish general election has produced a major advance for the Labour Party at the expense of the old parties of the right, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. Although final results will not be known until today it was clear last night that the decision by Albert Reynolds, the Fianna Fail leader to go to the country had backfired badly for his party. Page 2

Unity pledge

A senior Vatican figure, Cardinal Edward Cassidy, president of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, says that dialogue on reconciliation between the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches will continue despite the decision by the Church of England to ordain women priests. Page 4

Exam delay

The government's examination advisers are issuing details of next year's national curriculum tests for 14-year-olds without reaching agreement on the anthology that will form the basis of testing in English. Page 5

Yeltsin sacking

President Yeltsin dispensed with a second leading member of his reform team in two days, abolishing the post of state secretary held by Gennadi Burbulis' close aide. Page 12

Government anger on Lamont leak

Downing Street was did its best to shrug off the latest dent to the Chancellor's credibility as it was confirmed that Norman Lamont had failed to pay off an outstanding Access credit card bill.

Officials were angry that details of Mr Lamont's finances had leaked from the National Westminster Bank in what appeared to be a breach of confidentiality. Page 1



Health concern: the Princess of Wales and Virginia Bottomley, the health minister, at a briefing on mental health yesterday

Market high: London shares

reached an all-time high with the FT-SE 100 Index rising 32.2 points to close at 2741.8. The pound had a quiet day with the trade weighted index closing unchanged at 78.7. It was unchanged at \$1.5227 and against the mark it rose 0.32 pence to DM2.4284. Page 21

Gloomy CBI: Manufacturing industry is at its gloomiest about the prospects for output since the spring of 1991, despite the sharp cut in borrowing costs and the more competitive pound, according to the Confederation of British Industry. Page 21

Jubilee loan: Ernst-Günther Bröder, the chairman of the European Investment Bank, confirmed that his bank is in talks to lend up to £100 million for the building of the Jubilee Line extension. Page 21

Sunday confusion

The government has taken almost unprecedented precautions in its attempt to clear up the confusion over Sunday trading laws. Three options for reform of the law will be unveiled to MPs in an effort to make the debate open. Page 9

Craxi defiance

Bettino Craxi, the embattled Italian Socialist leader, yesterday ignored calls at the party's national assembly for him to stand down in the wake of a damaging corruption scandal. Page 10

Royal respondent

After a £3.75 million refit, the Norwich Theatre Royal reopened this week with the Royal Shakespeare Company in top form. Page 30

Screens of protest: New regulations on computer work practice are meeting opposition. Page 35

On the wrong track? An ancient path has become a battleground between walkers and motorised thrill seekers in four-wheel drive vehicles. Page 33

Hazard ahead: 21 per cent of drivers admit to having had intimate physical contact with a passenger while on the move. Page 33

Economy drive: Low costs have driven the design of two new off-road vehicles. Vaughan Freeman test drives the Range-Kover and the Frontier. Page 33

Royal respondent

After a £3.75 million refit, the Norwich Theatre Royal reopened this week with the Royal Shakespeare Company in top form. Page 30

Viennese whirl: The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra has a daring plan to play regular concerts in Berlin, Paris, London, New York and Tokyo. James Levine launches the series at the Festival Hall next week, the conductor's first British concert in 15 years. Page 31

Gunning for Annie: Benedict Nightingale's ears are tickled by Irving Berlin's immortal tunes but the new West End staging of *Annie Get Your Gun* leaves his eyes and brain less dazed. Page 29
Little topper: It has been an *annus horribilis* for the Gerry Cottle circus with objections barring him from setting up in London parks. But Baby D has arrived. Page 14

New mission: A Home Guard is marching into action as drug runners stalk our shores. Page 14

Broadcasting views: Now that the government's plans for the future of the BBC have been unveiled, how do the men at the top see its future? Page 15

Fidel's runaways: For two years until the missile crisis in October 1962, 14,048 Cuban children were flown out of the island by parents who believed that they would be indoctrinated. Page 15

TONY TRAVERS

The unfortunate Chancellor has been suffering a series of misfortunes that even Dennis Skinner might stop short of wishing on a political opponent. Page 16

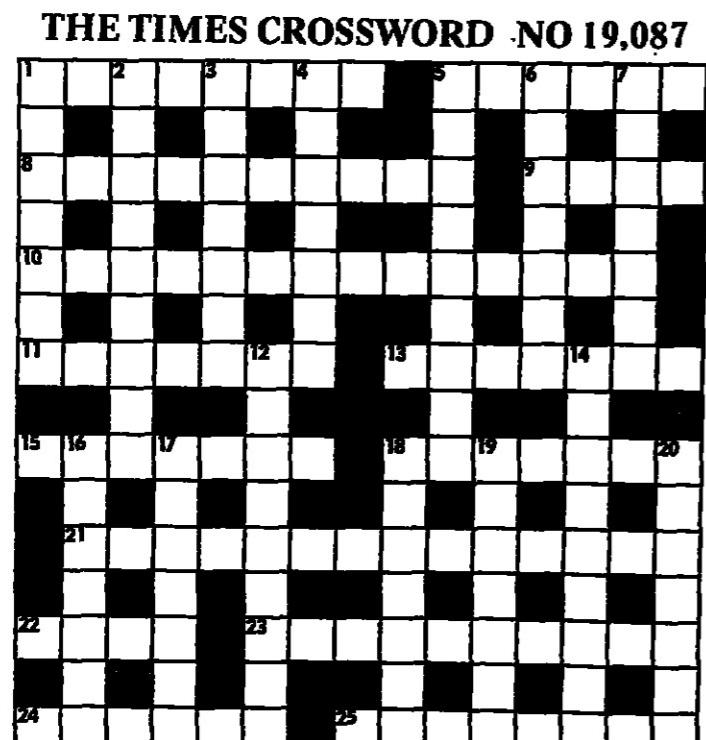
JOHN GRIGG

The taxman comes to call: The issue that is now, perhaps, more or less settled is that of the royal finances. It was a serious issue which should have been tackled long ago. Page 16

Readers confess to being unable to cope with tests designed for seven-year-old schoolchildren. Page 17

The turn-out at the polls was gratifyingly high, indicating that most people have not been consumed by cynicism about the political process as is sometimes claimed. Irish Press

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,087



THE TIMES WEATHER PAGE

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brighter with some showers, heavy at times, and snow on the hills. Rain will spread into Northern Ireland and northern England, becoming lighter and more patchy as it moves south. By evening it will turn clearer with a few showers over much of England and Wales. The South East will stay cloudy, with some rain. Outlook rain on Saturday, mainly dry on Sunday.

TODAY

Sun Rain Met

Aberdeen 3.1 0.23 3 C F

Angus 3.0 0.23 3 C F

Ayrshire 3.0 0.09 3 C F

Border 3.0 0.09 3 C F

Bogart Regis 6.1 0.55 11 C F

Bournemouth 4.9 0.48 11 C F

Bristol 4.9 0.48 11 C F

Budapest 2.8 0.44 10 C F

Cardiff 4.9 0.44 10 C F

Cleethorpes 4.9 0.22 10 C F

Douglas 0.5 0.02 10 C F

Edinburgh 0.5 0.19 10 C F

Falkirk 0.5 0.26 10 C F

Falmouth 4.9 0.34 11 C F

Farnham 0.5 0.11 10 C F

Glasgow 5.9 0.54 11 C F

Greenock 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Hastings 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Hull 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Inverness 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Ipswich 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Jarrow 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Kelvin 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Kirkcaldy 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Lancaster 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Liverpool 4.9 0.28 11 C F

London 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Nottingham 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Oban 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Portsmouth 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Ramsgate 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Sheffield 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Southend 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Stirling 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Torquay 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Weymouth 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Wigan 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Worcester 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Yarmouth 4.9 0.28 11 C F

Zeebrugge 4.9 0.28 11 C F

London Bridge 3.16 0.28 72 C F

Aberdeen 2.47 4.1 2.50 42 C F

Arbroath 2.21 3.4 2.55 42 C F

Cardiff 8.22 6.5 6.52 115 C F

Dundee 7.16 5.4 7.37 51 C F

Glasgow 5.6 4.0 5.65 123 C F

Hull 7.27 5.0 7.47 46 C F

Leeds 5.0 4.7 5.05 122 C F

Nottingham 5.0 4.7 5.05 122 C F

Sheffield 5.0 4.7 5.05 122 C F

Southend 5.0

TEMPUS

BPB tightens its belt at end of price war

BPB is to be commended on its decision to cut the interim dividend to levels at which payment is covered, even if it cost the company an 8 per cent in the share price yesterday. But the rebasing of the dividend speaks volumes about prospects for the markets in which the group operates, and it is hard to argue that the fall is overdone.

BPB is nearing the end of a bruising — and with the benefit of hindsight unnecessary — price war. Prices of its main product, plasterboard, are on the up again after five years of decline, but as Alan Turner, the chairman, concedes, the future is all about volume, and the cut dividend suggests that in the company's view any increases are likely to be limited.

This is realistic thinking, while plasterboard will continue to gain its share of the building market, that market is still shrinking. Meanwhile, BPB has further problems with its paper and packaging products also tied to economic trends, where, despite rising volumes, a 5 per cent first half fall in average prices played havoc with margins.

Pre-tax profits were up 15 per cent to £27.5 million, but an increased tax charge wiped out the increase. A dividend of 2.7p is easily covered by earnings of 3.7p, unlike last year's 4p payment against earnings of 3.9p.

BPB shares have outperformed the market by 37 per cent this year. A full-year payment of 7.6p puts the

shares on a yield of less than 6 per cent, while pre-tax profits of £50 million suggest a forward multiple of 26.

There are better recovery prospects in the sector.

Water groups

THE water companies' interim dividend season continues to show increases well above the rate of inflation, with Welsh Water lifting its payment by 9.4 per cent to 7.8p a share, and South West Water raising its payout by 9.9 per cent to 7.8p a share.

SWW's increase is partly a catch up from a year ago when the group was making its case with the regulators, but both groups tell investors what they want to hear at a time of falling interest rates — that is, despite the need to fund vast capital expenditure programmes. That dividend increases will remain progressive and real.

Welsh Water's pre-tax profits of £75.5 million (£4.1 million) and operating profits that were 9.3 per cent ahead at £67 million, and profits at SWW of £48.9 million (£47.1 million), after operating profits that jumped from £33.3 million to £41.6 million, were generally in line with expectations.

While there was some benefit from increased water charges, both achieved higher efficiencies through the impact of the recession on



Shrinking world: Alan Turner, chairman of BPB, says the future is all about volumes

industry saw metered sales lower in real terms. Meanwhile, capital investment programmes go on. Welsh

which would support a total dividend of 23.4p a share (21.4p) and give a 5.9 per cent yield on yesterday's share price of 52.6p.

SWW's profits could challenge the £94 million level (after £90 million last time), out of which the dividend could rise from last year's 21.7p to, say, 23.5p a share, to yield 6.3 per cent at 49.8p.

On current yield profiles, hold.

ONLY in truly depressed times could a food manufacturer seek comfort in lower interest rates and rationalisation benefits. But Northern Foods is facing what Christopher Haskins, its chairman, describes as the first recession since the

thirties to have hit the food trade. Northern managed to raise pre-tax profits 24 per cent to £68.4 million in the half year to end-September. But the dilutive effects of the £227 million rights issue made to buy Express Dairy and Eden Vale from Grand Metropolitan has left earnings up 3 per cent at 8.92p. These, however, easily cover a 5 per cent improvement in the dividend to 5.4p a share.

Stripping out the effects of the GrandMet acquisitions, Northern says its sales grew an underlying 7 per cent and that operating profits grew an underlying 8 per cent. Northern reported sales up 48 per cent to £969.9 million and operating profits up 41 per cent to £81.2 million.

Debt rose from £199 million to £243 million, taking gearing up from 72 to 82 per cent although the group expects to be cash-generative from December. The first half cash outflow was £44 million.

Northern's full-year performance hinges on Christmas and how quickly food prices recover in the New Year.

Brokers expect £155 million before tax for the full year, a figure that could shrink a little if January, February and March turn out to be too flat. At this level of profit, Northern will earn 20.1p a share, putting it on an earnings multiple of 14 at yesterday's share price of 280p, down 1p. A dividend up 5 per cent to 8.5p would give a yield of almost 4 per cent. Hold for further rationalisation benefits.

Seton seeks £13m issue to fund Cupal purchase

SETON Healthcare, the health products and sports equipment group, has launched a £13.1 million rights issue to fund the proposed £8.2 million acquisition of Cupal, a pharmaceuticals manufacturer and distributor based in Blackburn, Lancashire. The group has also entered into licensing and manufacturing agreements for the Betadine antiseptic range in the UK and Eire. Seton is paying £2 million for know-how, plant and machinery. The proposals will be put to the vote at an extraordinary meeting on December 14. The shares fell 19p to 27.3p before recovering to 27.6p. Seton made pre-tax profits of £2.1 million (£1.5 million) in the six months to end-August on turnover of £17.8 million (£17.5 million). Fully diluted earnings per share were 6.1p (4.7p). There is an interim dividend of 1.7p (1.5p) a share. The board expects to recommend a final dividend of 4.1p a share, for a total 5.8p.

Dan-Air challenge fails

VIRGIN Atlantic and the owners of British Midland have lost a renewed bid to challenge the legality of British Airways' takeover of Dan-Air. They asked the Court of Appeal to reverse a High Court ruling that they did not have an "arguable case". But Lord Justice Neill, sitting with Lords Justices Beldam and Kennedy, refused and blocked their application for judicial review of the government decision not to refer the takeover to the monopolies commission. They were also prevented from seeking court orders against the director-general of Fair Trading who they allege failed in his duty to recommend the referral to Michael Heseltine, the trade secretary. The court will give its reasons next week.

Gibbs Mew flat

GIBBS Mew, the Salisbury brewer responsible for the high octane Bishop's Tipple brand, suffered from heavy provisions against outstanding loans and the costs of mounting a defence against the defeated offer from New Zealand's Brierley Investments in the half year to September 26. Pre-tax profits were £377,000 (£503,000) after a £262,000 loan provision. A further £129,000 of defence costs were carried below the line. The interim dividend is held at 3p. Peter Gibbs, the chairman, said most of the group's pubs continued to find trading conditions depressed. The brewery division's overall increase in trading profits had been achieved mainly by increases in free trade volumes.

Tomkinsons slips 19%

THE "most difficult trading conditions since the Thirties" depressed pre-tax profits at Tomkinsons, the Worcestershire carpet maker, by almost 19 per cent to £1.04 million for the year to October 3. Sales fell from £21.2 million to £19.6 million, despite overseas exports rising 13.5 per cent during the period. The final dividend was unchanged at 8p a share, for a total 11.1p for the year. Earnings per share dropped from 13.9p to 10.3p. Lowry Maclean, chairman, said the group was still predominantly a supplier to the residential retail market and was hit by the slump in the housing market.

Scantronic advances

SCANTRONIC, the alarms and signalling products company, increased pre-tax profits 38 per cent to £1.5 million in the six months to end-September. Turnover rose 10 per cent to £18.5 million and earnings per share climbed from 1.01p to 1.84p. The interim dividend stays at 0.79p. Profits were enhanced by cost cutting and reorganisation of the American business, which made a loss of £15,000. Chris Brooks, chairman, said he hoped the US operation would be in profit by year-end. Mike Kennedy becomes president and chief operating officer of the American division.

Southnews sells titles

SOUTHNEWS, based at Ruislip, Middlesex, has sold the Sussex County Press, publisher of the *Worthing Guardian*, a free weekly, and the *Sussex Portobello*, a weekly magazine. Johnston Press, which owns the *West Sussex County Times*, is paying £1.4 million. Southnews says the sale of its Worthing operation marks the end of its programme to dispose of titles on the fringe of its publishing area. Pre-tax profits at Southnews rose to £651,000 in the six months to September 26 from £494,000. The interim dividend is raised to 0.7p from 0.5p. Earnings per share rose to 2.84p from 2.13p.

GEI doubles profit

PROFITS doubled at GEI, the machinery maker, as the strong performance of 1991 spilled over into the six months to September. Pre-tax profits just topped £1 million, against £500,000 in the previous first half. The dividend is held at 2.47p. The shares gained 2p to 68p. Michael Blackburn, chairman, said: "Packaging machinery had an outstanding year in 1991 and this level of performance was maintained. Processing machinery substantially increased its profits and the losses from special steels have been reduced." But he gave warning that trading conditions remained difficult.

Stoddard Sekers halves

THE demand for consumer durables continues to worsen and there is no sign of a recovery in confidence, says Stoddard Sekers, the Scottish carpet and fabric company. While turnover for the six months to September rose to £25.5 million from £22.2 million last time, the figures include four months' contribution from BMK, acquired in May. Pre-tax profit was halved, from £1 million to £430,000. Although losses have been stemmed at BMK, other divisions saw operating profits fall while finance charges rose from £190,000 to £60,000. Gearing is 43 per cent. The interim dividend is held at 0.75p.

Morland dented by bid costs

By MARTIN WALLER

HEAVY costs from the defence against this summer's £104 million hostile bid from Greene King dented attributable profits from Morland, the Thames Valley brewer, despite the achievement of profit forecasts made during the bid.

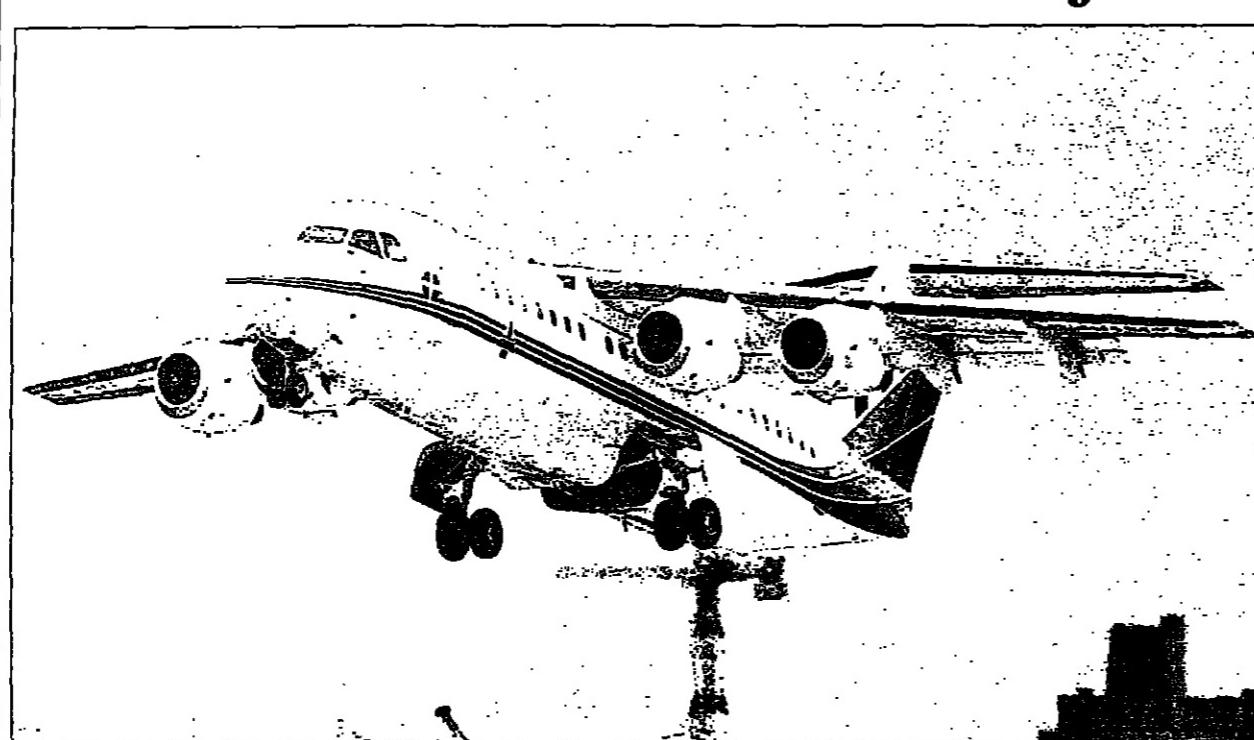
Pre-tax profits rose from £5.93 million to £7.62 million in the year to end-September, and the total dividend is increased to 8.4p from 7.1p as forecast, by means of a final payment of 5.88p.

Sir Humphrey Prideaux, chairman, said the forecasts had been achieved during "an extraordinary year for the company" despite the very poor trading conditions in the final three months, when Morland and the rest of the brewing industry was beset by bad weather and the intensifying economic gloom.

Volumes of Old Speckled Hen, Morland's premium brand and its first to be sold in cans, more than doubled over the year, even before the effect of a deal with Courage, attacked by Greene King during the bid, which will see Courage selling 5,000 barrels of the brand.

The cost of the bid defence is carried within an extraordinary item of £2.3 million and leaves profits attributable to shareholders 9.6 per cent lower at £3.51 million. Greene King retains a 29 per cent holding in Morland.

BAe wins order for five 146 jets



Up and away: the 146 regional jetliner which caused British Aerospace huge losses earlier this year

A £92 million order to British Aerospace for five new versions of BAe 146 regional jets, provides a boost for an aircraft that was responsible for a big slice of the recent profit slump at British Aerospace (Derek Harris writes).

But it is not expected to have any effect on the radical measures being taken by BAe to cope with its commercial aircraft problems.

The new order, for 85-seater regional jetliner (RJ85) versions of the 146, is from City Air Scandinavia which

operates a 146 fleet from London's City Airport to Swedish destinations. The new jets, an updated version announced last June, will fly the same routes. Delivery is scheduled for 1994-1995.

Two actions are being taken by BAe to tackle losses with the 146. The Hatfield, Hertfordshire, factory where the 146 is built, is due to close by the end of next year with the loss of nearly 3,000 jobs. An agreement in principle will also put the BAe regional aircraft business into a joint venture with the Taiwan Aerospace Corporation. Detailed talks are still proceeding but it is hoped the new joint company will build the four-engined 146 and its successors which may include a two-engined version.

Some Taiwan manufacturer envisaged while UK production would move to Woodford, Cheshire. BAe has set aside £1 billion for the restructuring of its regional aircraft business.

The 146 programme was first launched in the early

1970s since when a total of just over 200 had been sold until this latest contract. Production had been about 30 a year but this year only 24 are likely to be built.

The five jets make a total of 45 146 aircraft ordered in the past 12 months. This is claimed to be a 53 per cent share of the 70-120 seat airliner market. In September BAe announced a £129 million interim loss, pushed into the red by commercial aircraft division losses which plunged from £32 million to £28 million at half time.

He had little cheer for second half prospects. These were likely to be still influenced by price discounting and the absence of consumer confidence, he said.

The company would seek all profit improvement it could in a marketplace of "general uncertainty", he added.

KERRY Packer, Australia's richest man, has taken a strategic 8 per cent stake in one of the country's top four banks. He has spent just over £230 million (£104 million) for 8.27 per cent of Westpac Banking Corp. Under present banking laws he can take a maximum 10 per cent.

There are suggestions he will form an alliance with the nation's biggest institutional investor, the AMP Society, which has 15 per cent under a special dispensation. Mr Packer is expected to seek a similar waiver to go to 15 per cent.

The bank has been beset by problems this year, including a large shortfall in its A\$1.2 billion rights issue, the resignation of five directors, including the chairman, and a loss of A\$1.56 billion for the year to September 30.

Mr Packer is believed to have made A\$30 million on his investment. The shares closed at A\$2.99 from a nine-year low of A\$2.50 on November 11, having been at A\$4.59 at the beginning of the year.

Mr Packer's shares were bought through a subsidiary of his Consolidated Press Holdings.

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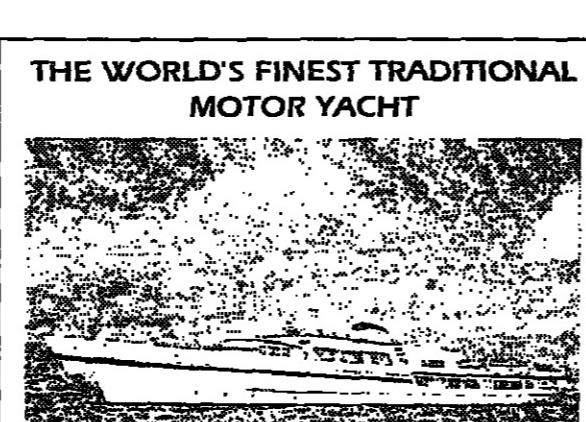
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Packer pays £104m for bank stake

FROM BRIAN BUCHANAN IN SYDNEY

KERRY Packer, Australia's richest man, has taken a strategic 8 per cent stake in one of the country's top four banks.

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Resisting the recession

Interim Report

"The satisfactory start to the year gives encouragement that our development strategy is well founded. Powell Duffryn has withstood the worst effects of the recession thus far and the board is confident the Group will continue to do so."

David Hubbard

Results for the half year ended 30 September	

<tbl

Dart pegs payout as profits fall

DART Group, the air freighter, saw interim profits slide to £96.5 million in the half year to September from £11.9 million previously. The interim dividend remains 1.3p.

Philip Meeson, chairman, said: "We have not seen any uplift in trading in the second half. These results mask the very hard work that has gone on throughout the group, which is trading in an extremely harsh economic climate. We have had to cut back in some areas to ensure our competitiveness, but our already tight ship has meant relatively few redundancies."

Concentric shares

Concentric, the engineering designer, is to issue one free share for every one held after almost doubling pre-tax profits in the year to September from £4.2 million. The final dividend is held at 7.63p, making 11.17p.

Castings slips

Customers have fallen away since August at Castings, the foundry operator. Business had picked up before the general election. Castings made interim pre-tax profit of £1.59 million in the six months to September, against £1.7 million last time. The interim dividend remains 1.3p.

Indonesian deal

The Simon Engineering offshoot, ULC Consultants, and its Indonesian partner, Intersys, have signed a \$4.9 million contract with Indonesia's government to develop computer technology for land resource evaluation and planning.

Dividend rises

Brockhampton Holdings, the parent of Portsmouth Water, has lifted its interim dividend from 1.65p to 2.2p for the six months to September after pre-tax profits rose from £1.2 million to £1.9 million. The performance should be repeated in the second half, the company says.

Protean buys

Protean has acquired DA Baldwin for £300,000. Baldwin, based in the West Midlands, sells and services water softeners and other water treatment plant.

STOCK MARKET

US recovery hopes prompt record

HOPES that the US economy may have finally turned the corner drove share prices on the London stock market to an all-time closing high.

Despite the closure of Wall Street for the Thanksgiving holiday, domestic share prices closed at their best of the day with a rise of 32.2 to a new peak of 2,741.8. That compares with the previous best of 2,737.8 on May 11 this year.

Turnover was a modest 601 million shares and failed to justify the price movements recorded. Much of the improvement stemmed from the financial futures market where several leading securities houses were big buyers, convinced that the American economy was on the verge of a pick-up.

Optimism over the American economy enabled fund managers to shrug off worries that the French government may decide to veto the Gatt word trade agreement.

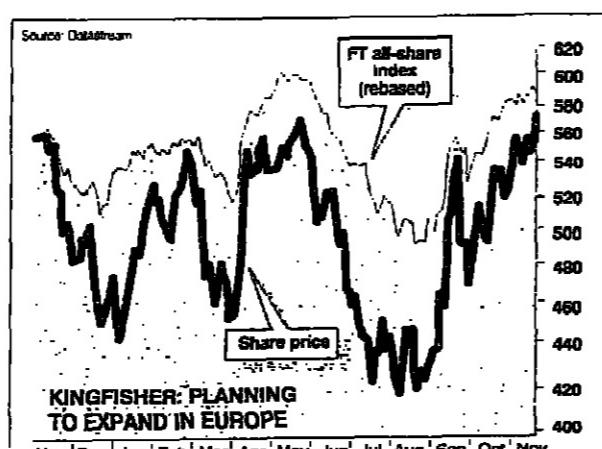
Those companies with an international flavour continued to lead the way, with gains for BAT Industries of 16p to 90p, BOC Group 4p to 75p, Cable and Wireless 19p to 67p, Grand Metropolitan 10p to 43p, and RTZ 17p to 60p, while Unilever shrugged off this week's gloomy warning about the trading outlook to finish 18p better at £10.57.

ICI continued to lose ground, falling 13p to 981p, reflecting further market consideration of the proposed demerger of its bulk chemicals and bio-science operations into separate divisions. Dealers said the price was also depressed by a line of 500,000 shares on offer.

Baring Securities has taken a similar line to Smith New Court and is urging clients to sell the shares down to 900p. It believes the proposed demerger will become an albatross round the group's neck and will be accompanied by a cut in the dividend and a £500 million rights issue from the bio-science side. Baring forecasts that both demerged companies will pay a 20p dividend in 1993, equivalent to a 27 per cent cut in the combined group dividend.

Kingfisher, the Woolworth, Comet and B&Q stores group, jumped 12p to 573p on talk that it is considering paying £250 million for a near-30 per cent in Castorama, the DIY chain, held by Carrefour. Carrefour is said to be in talks with a number of buyers.

Allied-Lyons fell 15p to 463p on suggestions that James Capel, the stockbroker, had downgraded its profit forecast for the current year by £20 million to £285 million because of the recession. There was also talk that Cazenove,



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BRITISH FUNDS

ATTEMPTS by the gilt market to recover some of Wednesday's losses suffered a setback in late trading as selling on the futures market dragged prices lower.

Traders on the futures market have been shadowing events on European bond markets where prices have been depressed by the French threat to veto the Gatt deal.

Fund managers spent much time on the sidelines, with demand further suppressed by Wall Street's closure for Thanksgiving Day. The long gilt market turned around part in thin trading before losing ground to end 12 ticks lower at £992½. A total of 22,000 contracts were completed.

In the cash market, prices fared little better. At the shorter end, Treasury 134 per cent 1997 lost £1 to £120½, while at the long end, Treasury 9 per cent 2012 was 10 ticks off at £101½.

SHORTS (under 5 years)

1992 High	Low	Stock	Price	Int.	Val.	Grs.	1992 High	Low	Stock	Price	Int.	Val.	Grs.
100	95	Treas 6½ 1993	97½	-	6,01	623	111	102	Treas 10½ 2002	109½	-	6,05	630
100	95	Treas 8½ 1993	103½	-	1,23	147	113	103	Treas 10½ 2003	110½	-	6,07	633
100	95	Treas 12½ 1993	107½	-	12,06	1,533	109	95	Treas 10½ 1994	106½	-	5,14	571
100	95	Treas 15½ 1993	107	-	12,63	1,57	109	95	Treas 10½ 2004	107½	-	4,71	531
100	95	Treas 8½ 1994	102½	-	8,31	1,04	109	95	Treas 9½ 2005	102½	-	4,23	463
100	95	Treas 10½ 1994	104½	-	8,52	1,06	109	95	Treas 12½ 2005	124½	-	10,23	531
100	95	Exch 12½ 1994	109½	-	6,53	7,39	111	112	Treas 10½ 2006	109½	-	6,05	630
100	95	Exch 14½ 1994	109½	-	11,43	1,559	113	107	Treas 10½ 2007	110½	-	6,24	643
100	95	Gas 3½ 1995/96	94½	-	3,16	516	106	95	Treas 9½ 2008	96	-	5,26	572
100	95	Gas 10½ 1995	108½	-	9,49	1,58	109	95	Treas 11½ 2008	109½	-	4,84	562
100	95	Treas 12½ 1995	110½	-	10,71	1,61	109	95	Treas 11½ 2009	110½	-	5,26	572
100	95	Treas 15½ 1995	110½	-	11,09	1,64	109	95	Treas 9½ 2010	101½	-	5,88	615
100	95	Treas 18½ 1995	109½	-	9,63	1,58	109	95	Treas 12½ 2010	121½	-	7,25	735
100	95	Treas 21½ 1995	117½	-	11,76	1,71	109	95	Treas 11½ 2011	110½	-	5,09	571
100	95	Treas 24½ 1995	123½	-	12,23	1,74	109	95	Treas 12½ 2011	120½	-	8,25	871
100	95	Treas 10½ 1997	111½	-	9,45	1,74	109	95	Treas 12½ 2012	121½	-	8,25	871
100	95	Treas 13½ 1997	112½	-	11,02	1,74	109	95	Treas 12½ 2013/17	120½	-	8,25	871

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

1992 High	Low	Stock	Price	Int.	Val.	Grs.	1992 High	Low	Stock	Price	Int.	Val.	Grs.
100	94	Treas 8½ 1997	105½	-	8,22	7,28	120	112	Com 2½ 1997	25½	-	6,27	637
100	95	Treas 10½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 1998	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 12½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 1999	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 15½ 1997	119½	-	10,07	7,53	120	112	Com 2½ 2000	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 18½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2001	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 21½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2002	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 24½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2003	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 27½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2004	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 30½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2005	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 33½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2006	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 36½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2007	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 39½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2008	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 42½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2009	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 45½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2010	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 48½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2011	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 51½ 1997	120½	-	12,72	1,66	120	112	Com 2½ 2012	26½	-	6,22	637
100	95	Treas 54½ 1997	120½	-	12,72								

Japan offered a standard recipe

Japan has reason to rue its acceptance of American-led international demands for deregulation. The more Japan has integrated into the international financial system, the more it has caught the endemic twin diseases of stagnation and destabilisation, due to excessive influence of the financial sector in the economy. The past six years of financial boom and especially the subsequent bust can be attributed in large measure to financial deregulation and the messy introduction of Anglo-Saxon rules in an economy that worked through bureaucratic co-operation and management. Germany, which has managed to avoid or at least dilute this trend, has fared much better.

The latest Anglo-Saxon prescriptions from the OECD will therefore be received with mixed feelings by the board of Japan Inc. The country has a will to adapt, and a capacity to reform its root and branch, that are unequalled. They must be the envy of reformers in the former Soviet bloc, on which comparable standard agendas are being pressed. Yet Japanese policymakers must question whether these prescriptions are right and wonder in whose interest they are being proposed.

In principle, reforms of cartels, sweeping away regulations that stifle new competition in distribution, and freeing up land control and use all seem likely to stimulate economic activity. They are, unlike the mid-Eighties pressures, primarily reforms to improve the working of internal markets. This is, however, deceptive. In practice, as before, these prescriptions uncannily reflect demands from North America and Europe to make Japan do business their way so that their big firms can succeed better in Japan. This is splendid for the multinationals. Japan also needs to make some further concessions to Western traders to ease trade frictions, but that is not sole test policymakers should apply.

Reforms are needed. Japan must, for instance, play its full part in the Gatt round by allowing much freer access for food imports at the expense of its heavily protected small farmers. Land use reform could play a big part, but the same effect might be achieved by quite different measures that would be more environmentally friendly and less socially destructive, as French politicians might agree. The important message, perhaps, is that the next phase of Japanese growth is likely to rely much less on the domestic manufacturing sector and be more internal in emphasis. Market opening will need to be planned better this time, however. The sort of simplistic solutions applied to Russia, for lack of an alternative, look out of place.

Opec illusion

Anything that seems to offer stability must seem attractive to those struggling to rebuild the industries of the former Soviet Union, but there are limits. Those members of Opec outside the Middle East would surely welcome with open arms any suggestion that Kazakhstan, and particularly Russia, might consider joining the increasingly narrow and regional oil cartel. Opec meetings are dominated by Middle East politics, most recently by the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, rather than mutual self-help and friendly co-operation.

Russia needs to develop oil production, then exports, primarily with the help of western oil companies. It may be anxious not to be captive to the Western camp, but the last thing it needs is an Opec quota or even "allocation". As similarly placed Mexico discovered, there are advantages to being on good terms with other big oil producers in tricky times, and co-ordinating thinking. That is different from joining a cartel that does not work but still has the delusion that its decisions affect the world.

The men who step in when businesses are failing say rescue, not closure, is foremost in their minds, writes Jon Ashworth

How do you value an elephant? Such is the dilemma facing Chris Barlow, of Cork Gully, who shut down Windsor Safari Park a month ago and is still pondering what to do with its inmates. Such a task is all part of the job for Britain's insolvency practitioners, who are among the most controversial members of the business world. When a construction giant collapses or an investment company folds, they are first on the scene. The work that ensues makes fortunes for their firms but comes at a price — little sleep, no family life, and untold social pressures.

Michael Jordan, of Cork Gully, Britain's biggest insolvency practice, led the team that stepped in when Peter Clowes' investment empire crumbled in May 1988. His work as administrator of Poly Peck International, while lucrative, has had an unpleasant sting in the tail. Mr Jordan, and Richard Stone, senior corporate finance partner at Coopers & Lybrand, Cork Gully's affiliate, were recently found guilty by accountancy regulators of breaching ethical guidelines. The charges arose because Coopers had done some work for Poly Peck and Asil Nadir, its chairman, before the company was placed in administration in October 1990.

Christopher Hughes, managing partner of Cork Gully, has his hands full with the insurance sector. His colleague Ian Bond was liquidator of Amalgamated Investment and Property, the largest property collapse of the seventies, and was more recently receiver to Airship Industries. With 30 years in the industry, he follows legendary insolvency practitioners like Richard Turton, Sir Kenneth Cork and Bill Mackay.

Christopher Morris, head of insolvency at Touche Ross, shot to fame when Laker Airways collapsed in 1982. He sued most of the leading airlines for £1 billion, accusing them of pricing Laker out of the skies. The £20 million or so he raised in an out-of-court settlement was more than enough to reimburse Laker ticket holders. Aeroplanes gave way to battery-powered cars when he stepped in after Sir Clive Sinclair's ambitious C5 project failed. He has his hands full now as joint administrator of Poly Peck and liquidator of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. One associate said: "He's flamboyant while appearing very calm at the same time. You have to be if you want to stand on a stool and face 1,000 steelworkers."

Morris often shares the headlines with Brian Smouha, the firm's banking specialist, who, as lead liquidator of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, is working on a plan to extract compensation from the Bank



Jumbo task: insolvency experts must put a value on the elephants at Windsor Safari Park, closed down by Cork Gully a month ago

of England. Smouha led the liquidation of Banco Ambrosiano in 1984.

Nigel Hamilton, national head of insolvency and recovery services at Ernest & Young, has been involved with some of Britain's biggest corporate collapses. His assignments include Barlow Clowes, Coloroll, Lowndes Queensway and Butlers Wharf. "For me, insolvency started off as a way of staying in the profession and having an interesting job," said Mr Hamilton, president of the Society of Practitioners of Insolvency. "We all know one another but very rarely get together as a group."

Stephen Adamson, of Ernst & Young, led efforts to save the Jubilee Line underground extension in London's Docklands. "We do have long hours, but we're as good as our last job. The banks don't have any obligation to you as an insolvency practitioner." Late on May 27, bankers to Canary Wharf called in the administrators. "I worked through the night, got bed at 4 am and was up again at 5.30," said Mr Adamson. "At 8.30, judge heard the order in his flat, then we rushed off to Canary Wharf to inform the staff."

He found himself in a similar situation when British & Commonwealth collapsed in June 1990. "The order had to be made on a Sunday night to prevent a run on Monday morning. We went to the judge at his home in Holland Park, but he had

hurt his back and we saw him in his bedroom."

Unlike many of his peers Tim Hayward, head of corporate recovery at KPMG Peat Marwick, combined insolvency work with general practice until the mid-eighties. He cut his teeth when Rolls-Royce collapsed in 1971 and found himself landing on tarpaulins off the Cape of Good Hope after Court Line, the package holiday operator, collapsed in August 1974. "I went out to South Africa to deal with the helicopter side and keep up morale," he said.

John Talbot of Arthur Andersen, can thank Robert Maxwell for his new-found fame. His talent for insolvency was discovered in 1974 after the company he worked for called in the receivers. They gave him a job. In October 1991, he made receiver history by taking Norfolk House, the collapsed petrol station group, back to the stock market at Frust Group. As administrator to the Maxwell private companies, Mr Talbot controls the 54 per cent stake in Mirror Group Newspapers owned by the late Robert Maxwell's creditor banks. Price Waterhouse has pulled out all the stops for the administration of Maxwell Communication Corporation. At its peak, nearly 100 people were working on MCC full time. David Lee, a specialist investigator, has been leading efforts to trace assets. Mark Homan, lead administrator of MCC,

said there is little satisfaction in the Maxwell-type case, renumeration aside. "I think the recession of the early eighties was the best in the sense that we were dealing with real people making real things. Now, we're dealing with 'funny money'.

People who criticise the level of fees have no idea of the work involved. We have \$1,000 million in assets to sell in the US for a start, quite apart from the fraud."

He works 14 to 15-hour days and has been alternating between London and New York. Peter Phillips, of Buchler Phillips, is receiver to Maxwell's personal estate. He has taken about 1,000 insolvency appointments since 1986. The task of winding up Bishopsgate Investment Management, which ran the Maxwell pension funds, has fallen on Neil Cooper, of Robson Rhodes. "I have been working 15 to 18-hour days for most of the past year," said Mr Cooper, who is also trustee in bankruptcy to Asil Nadir and is helping wind up the European assets of Alan Bond. He and Ipe Jacob are receivers to Clarke Foods, which owns Lyons Maid ice cream.

The cost of the Maxwell investigations has angered shareholders and pensioners alike. Mr Cooper's fees had reached £1.6 million at the last count, but he had in turn made £5.8 million in income on secured assets of £249 million. The cost of recovering £110 million from private Maxwell companies has reached £11 million, and £15 million has been spent recovering £59 million at MCC.

Allan Griffiths, head of a 400-strong insolvency team at Grant Thornton, saved Keith Prowse, the ticket and entertainments group. "We came in on a Friday night after negotiations with two parties collapsed," said Mr Griffiths. "In ten nights, I had no more than 30 hours' sleep." Grant Thornton has one of the busiest insolvency departments after Cork Gully and KPMG Peat Marwick, despite its smaller size. "The general view of the public is that we are just merchants who close things down," said Mr Griffiths, 47. "To the contrary, 80 per cent of our time is now spent on rescue rather than insolvency."

Powerful regional players include Leonard Curtis and Levy Gee. Peter Copp and Ray Hocking, of Stoy Hayward, specialise in the UK hotel industry; as does Stuart Baird, who heads the insolvency team at Pannell Kerr Forster. The work of these players is full of surprises. "I once tracked a possible asset to a safe deposit box in New York," said Mr Hocking, who found himself in the headlines in June 1990 when Dunsdale Securities collapsed. "We opened it up and found 52 gold bars worth £1 million."

THE TIMES CITY DIARY



Record goes up in smoke

RECESSION? What recession? The cigar merchants of St James's, London, are celebrating what is almost certainly the biggest single private sale of cigars in the history of the trade. The previous record was set in 1982 when an Englishman walked into the Robert Lewis showroom at 19 St James's Street and paid £48,750 for approximately 30,000 cigars — enough, it was estimated, to keep him puffing away for at least ten years. That record was shattered last week when an accountant and a solicitor, reputedly acting for a Far Eastern connoisseur, arrived at Davidoff of London and agreed a sum of £72,120 for 5,000 Davidoff No. 1's and 2,000 Davidoff No. 2's, a milder range of Havana cigars. "It is the first time in my life that I have sold cigars through a solicitor," says Edward Sahakian, the proprietor, who is also in the dark over the identity of his client. "Whoever he is, he likes the good things in life."

In the Lainglight

SHOULD company chairmen strive to look grim during the recession or are they allowed to smile? Complaints from analysts that Martin Laing, chairman of John Laing, the badly affected construction group, always looks depressed and dour have inspired some interesting stories. According to *Building Magazine*, Laing was so concerned about miserable pictures of



Laing: serious about image

Stakis, the leisure group, has taken over Queens Hall, Edinburgh, and is treating 200 guests to a birthday concert. Robertson says the event is to "say thank you to friends and the many people who have helped me", but he is not aiming for an eclectic Desert Island Discs style programme. Instead, he is indulging in a night of undiluted Richard Strauss. "I've been addicted to him for 30 years and I think that he who pays the piper should be able to call the tune." With Norman Delmar conducting the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, guests are unlikely to complain.

Watch words

SPECULATIVE hype seems to be reaching feverish proportions at Bonham's, the Knightsbridge auction house, which is holding the first British sale of "collector pieces" Swatch watches today. With market manipulation such as City brokers only dream of, Nicholas Hayek, the cream, has engineered "secondary" and "futures" markets in limited Swatch editions and Alexander Crum Ewing, Bonham's "Swatch specialist", shamelessly adopting City jargon, says certain lots in today's sale are already "fifteen times over-subscribed". Hype it may be, but the prices expected indicate healthy profits for investors. Lot 39, "Hollywood Dream" is one of a "limited" edition of 5,000 watches created for Christmas 1990. It originally sold for £50 and is expected to fetch £800 to £1,000 today.

DEBRA ISAAC

Foreign competition deprives British industry of business

From L. Bennett

Sir, British Steel has, while reporting operating losses running at £1 million a week, complained about the substantial imports of Eastern bloc steel into the UK. Unfair competition is claimed as Eastern bloc countries take advantage of their low costs and soft currencies to make significant inroads into the UK market. Government intervention is requested to control the level of imports and prevent further closures and redundancies.

This request should be considered in the light of British Steel's purchasing policy for coal. Its steelworks consume over 10 million tonnes of coal per annum — hardly an ounce of which is from the Durham or Welsh coalfields where the main steelworks are located.

British Steel has opted to import much of its coal from the same Eastern bloc countries (including Poland and

Ofwat should clear up water bill confusion

From J. E. Reddall

Sir, In his letter about water charges (November 9) Mr Ford expresses the expectation that meters will bring bills payable in arrears. This is a view that the Mid Sussex Water Company does not appear to share. On 8 September they installed at my request and cost a water meter at my property. Since then I have been trying by telephone and letter to obtain from them amended bills for the first and second halves of the accounting year 1 April 1992 to 31 March 1993. Their only response so far has been to send me a final notice for the period 1 October 1992 to 31 March 1993 on

the old rateable value basis of a meter.

I have of course returned this for correction. But surely Ofwat should require water companies, when entering into contracts with customers to install meters, to set out clearly the way in which the charge from payment in advance based on rateable value to payment in arrears based on metered consumption will be made.

Yours faithfully,
J. E. REDDALL
The Sedge House,
Farm Lane,
Ditchling,
Hassocks,
West Sussex.

Bradford & Bingley mortgage rates are down.

Notice is given to borrowers whose existing variable rate loan or mortgage was completed on or before 22nd January 1992 that the rate charged will be reduced by 1.45% on 1st December 1992 (or later in accordance with the mortgage deed).

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For all other borrowers who completed between 25th September and 20th October the rate charged will be reduced by 0.7% on 1st December 1992.

Borrowers who completed on or after 21st October 1992 already benefit from the Society's new rate structure and therefore will remain at their current level.

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7	Carson Comps	Ledgers	
8	Concentric	Industrial	
9	Park Foods	Foods	
10	Genex	Mining	
11	Alico Colloids	Chemicals	
12	Jardine Math	Industrial	
13	Mars Spencer	Drapery/Stns	
14	Reliance Sec	Business Serv	
15	Unilever	Foods	
16	Smith WH A'	Drapery/Stns	
17	Habland (J)	Chemicals	
18	Johnson Mat	Industrial	
19	Microfilm Rep	Electrical	
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22	Caledonia	Finance/Land	
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24	Pedding Food	Foods	
25	Capital Radio	Leisure	
26	Barclays	Banks/Disc	
27	Telstar Chem	Industrial	
28	Mayday	Electrical	
29	Stand Chart	Banks/Disc	
30	Morland	Brasseries	
31	Starkey Pub	Newspaper/Pub	
32	Northumbrian	Water	
33	Kinross	Mining	
34	Br Vins	Industrial	
35	Renshaw	Business Serv	
36	Health C E	Insurance	
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38	De La Rue	Industrial	
39	Minerva	Mining	
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If you have fished off your eighth share in our Match The Shares game today, claim your prize by telephoning 0254 53272 between 10.00am and 5.00pm (see the Sunday Times for full details)

Three winners equally share yesterday's Portfolio Plus prize of £2,000. They are Mr J Ware, Bristol; Mrs R Savage, Ilford, and Miss C Winstanley of London W11.

1992 High Low Company Price Net Yld % Div P/E

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

301	Abbey Md	HP	15	10	22	11
302	Allied Irish	HP	15	10	22	11
303	Allied New	HP	15	10	22	11
304	Barclays	HP	15	10	22	11
305	BSI	HP	15	10	22	11
306	HSBC	HP	15	10	22	11
307	Bank Scotland	HP	15	10	22	11
308	Bank of Scotland	HP	15	10	22	11
309	Bankers Trust	HP	15	10	22	11
310	Barclays	HP	15	10	22	11
311	Chase Manhattan	HP	15	10	22	11
312	Citibank	HP	15	10	22	11
313	Citibank N A	HP	15	10	22	11
314	Citibank N Y	HP	15	10	22	11
315	Citibank S A	HP	15	10	22	11
316	Citibank U K	HP	15	10	22	11
317	Citibank U S	HP	15	10	22	11
318	Citibank W A	HP	15	10	22	11
319	Citibank W H	HP	15	10	22	11
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393	Citibank W S</					

BSI aims to help small businesses

By DEREK HARRIS

THE British Standards Institution (BSI), target of small business wrath over difficulties for firms wanting to secure the BS750 quality assurance standard, is setting up a working group to plan a way forward.

Between ten and 15 organisations representing small business interests are likely to be involved on the working group. It is hoped to have a framework in place by the new year to allow the start of discussions.

One early suggestion, that there be a much simplified standard for the small fry among businesses, has left BSI arguing that such a mark two version would discriminate against smaller firms because it would seem a lower grade.

It means the central problem now is how to make the 5750 standard more accessible to small businesses. Standard guidelines tend to be written in general terms so BSI has been inclined to rely on sector trading associations, working out with them, guidelines specifically adapted for a sector.

The hope had been that this combination would be enough for many businesses since they proba-

bly have two thirds of quality systems in place already. The certification procedure itself costs at least £1,200 for small businesses, with increments according to size.

Nevertheless, unsure companies have been turning to consultants for help in navigating through the procedures. This can add thousands of pounds to the cost of achieving certification. Consultancy guidance to groups of firms can shrink the costs to an extent.

Until the working party has a verdict, the best thing a small business can do is see how far trading association help is available. Training and enterprise councils as well as local enterprise agencies may offer help. Trade and industry department regional offices keep lists of consultants and offer some cash aid.

Additionally, BSI has four regional offices around the country and is looking at the prospect of increasing this coverage.

The working party will also keep an eye on how other British standards are working out. There are 10,000 or more for manufacturing. Fast approaching is a new environmental standard, BS750.

Partnership pays off

PARTNERSHIP sourcing, close co-operation between companies and their suppliers to boost efficiency, is making more impact two years after an initiative by the Confederation of British Industry. There is a special interest for smaller businesses because they can figure strongly among suppliers.

A partnership sourcing steering

group was set up by the CBI to persuade companies to take this route. Typically, a big company will buy a supplier to produce the right components or service at the right price and quality and the mutual benefits will be shared equitably.

The latest progress report from the steering group says that although partnership sourcing cannot be regarded as a panacea — "it is not easy and can be very difficult" — there was no doubt that the benefits far outweighed disadvantages. For most companies a 1 per cent saving spent on purchasing could boost profits by as much as would a 10 per cent increase in sales volume, the group says.

A CBI survey shows that awareness of partnership sourcing among companies has risen to 90 per cent against 70 per cent in 1991. How this will translate into action remains to be seen, a crucial element being the development of trust between a big company and its suppliers. But detailed advice is now available to companies and regional conferences and seminars around the country are being used to spread the message.

By WIDGET FINN

TIMES are hard for many in the travel industry yet Christopher Whinney boasts a doubling of his travel business although his plans were delayed through a nine-month strike at the Registry of Companies. Nevertheless, Mr Whinney pressed on and used the capital to open a tiny shop in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, selling walking equipment. This and a further outlet in Oxford produced a healthy turnover which subsidised

London to Rome. In 1979, he raised £19,000 through the sale of a property in Italy to set up his travel business although his plans were delayed through a nine-month strike at the Registry of Companies. Nevertheless, Mr Whinney pressed on and used the capital to open a tiny shop in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, selling walking equipment. This and a further outlet in Oxford produced a healthy turnover which subsidised

the industry norm of 10 per cent. Three quarters of bookings come through personal recommendation or repeat business. The eleventh holiday booked by a customer is free and several have been claimed. In seven years, the customer base increased gradually to 230. It was still a highly personalised business with all tours led by Mr Whinney or his co-director Philippa Farrow.

Mr Whinney recalled: "In 1986 we were affected by the slump in

other travel firms would envy even that. The investment in training has paid off. All training (seven days for new staff who are joined by everyone else for a further two days) costs about £10,000 for accommodation plus a huge amount of staff time".

Within a year the group had won a national training award for its initiative and last year was one of the first companies to win an Investors in People accolade.

The staff, Mr Whinney says, now run trips "far better than we ever did". Customers seem to agree — end of holiday questionnaires have scored either good or excellent ratings this year. The staffing level is deliberately kept constant at about 50, ten of them in the Oxford office and 40 tour leaders.

Mr Whinney said: "The way to maintain high standards is through communication. We're small enough for everyone to know and to be able to talk regularly to each other. If the company got bigger we would have to put in another tier of management — and lose that personal touch which is essential to our business."

Businesses that have plucked triumph from disaster are being sought by Durham University Business School (Dubs). A competition, with a £1,000 prize for the winner, is being used to catch their interest because Dubs is keen to see what lessons may be learned for other recession-hit small firms. It also believes that entering for the contest will encourage businesses to examine their operations carefully.

Entrants must be from the north of England and should have undertaken higher education before going into business. They will compete for The Great Escape award which is being sponsored by CPCR, a human resources consultant near Newcastle upon Tyne. The award will be made next May. Contact David Mullin, director of graduate enterprise, Dubs, Mill Hill Lane, Durham DH1 3LB. Telephone 091 374 2223.

□ The Women's Enterprise Centre, which helps inner London women gain skills to run a business, is asking the European Social Fund for a £1,200 grant to expand its work. Training, ranging from one day to a month, matches school hours and includes assertiveness and communication as well as business skills. The non-profit-making centre, which also runs mixed training courses, is supported by Camden Enterprise Agency and has training links with Central London Training and Enterprise Council.

Jane Howden, managing director, believes that as more companies will need to contract work out when the recession ends, this is a good time to lay small business foundations. Contact 57 Pratt Street, London NW1 0DP. Telephone 071 482 2128.

□ For three quarters of small firms belonging to the Forum of Private Business the biggest current worry is the director who winds up a business to escape creditors and then sets up a new operation. Almost as many are still looking for late payment legislation. FOB is at Kinniside, Cheshire. Telephone 0865 634467.

□ Members of the Association of British Factors and Discounters were supplying companies with nearly £1.3 billion of finance linked to sales at the end of September. Typical customers are small and medium sized businesses. International Factors, the largest member, contributed £247 million, a 14 per cent rise over a year earlier.

EDITOR DEREK HARRIS

A walk on the quiet side

BILL POTTER



On the road again: Christopher Whinney researches all new walks himself, writing the holiday brochures en route

London to Rome. In 1979, he raised £19,000 through the sale of a property in Italy to set up his travel business although his plans were delayed through a nine-month strike at the Registry of Companies. Nevertheless, Mr Whinney pressed on and used the capital to open a tiny shop in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, selling walking equipment. This and a further outlet in Oxford produced a healthy turnover which subsidised

the travel industry but we decided to go against all the expert advice and expand. Instead of putting money into marketing holidays we invested in training staff who could match our enthusiasm and breadth of knowledge in leading the tours."

From £3,685 in 1979 the business has grown sales of £2.5 million a year. Annual growth is down from last year's 60 per cent to 20 per cent this year although many

travel companies during its early years. Enthusiasts came from Cornwall to Kent to get advice on equipment and Mr Whinney swiftly learned that customer care was particularly good for business. The travel company's initial advertisement in *Punch* magazine — sold the first year's total of 11 holidays. The advertising budget is still low, about 1 per cent of turnover against

the travel industry but we decided to go against all the expert advice and expand. Instead of putting

money into marketing holidays we invested in training staff who could match our enthusiasm and breadth of knowledge in leading the tours."

From £3,685 in 1979 the business has grown sales of £2.5 million a year. Annual growth is down from last year's 60 per cent to 20 per cent this year although many

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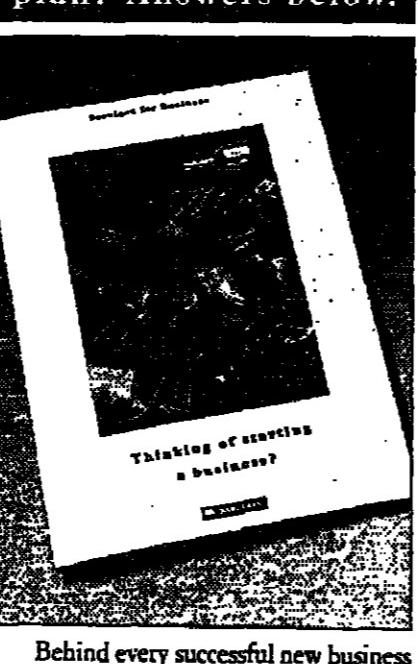
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THEATRE page 30

Split personality:
Desmond Barrit plays
twins at the reopened
Theatre Royal, Norwich

ARTS

MUSIC page 31

James Levine opens the
Vienna Philharmonic's
ambitious world tour
of subscription concerts



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GALLERIES: Richard Cork on the darker world below the sunny surface of Patrick Caulfield's work

Attractive, but uneasy on the eye

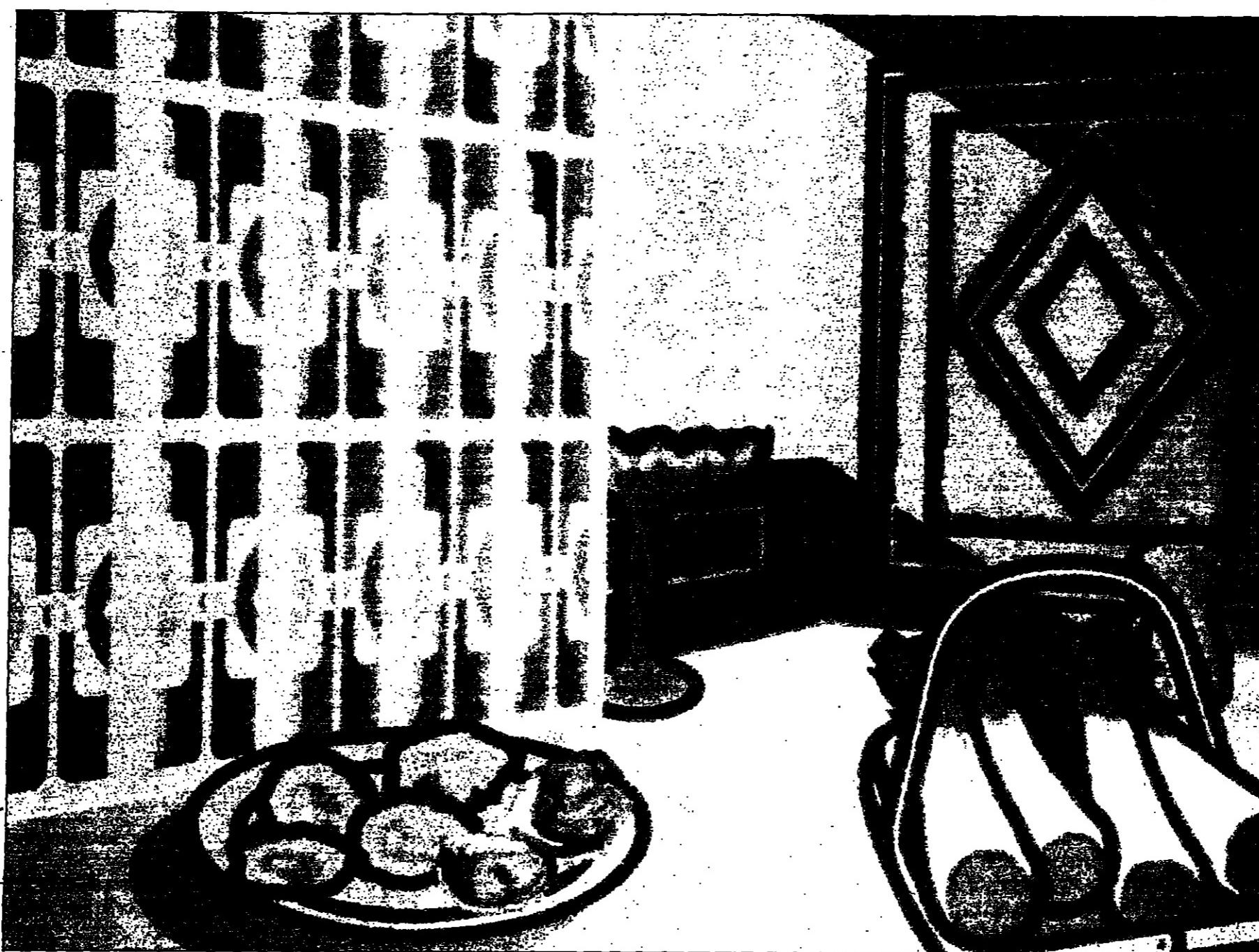
Inimate, congenial, and still retaining an aura of the tea room it was originally intended to be, the Serpentine Gallery proves an ideal location for a Patrick Caulfield retrospective. His paintings, many of them modest in size, look thoroughly at home on the hospitable white walls. Preoccupied above all with the theme of drinks and meals about to be consumed, they chime with the Serpentine's atmosphere as readily as its real tables and chairs must once have done. These are civilised images, ostensibly bound up with pleasure alone. And the seductive views of parkland outside the gallery neatly mirror Caulfield's partiality for contrasting his well-stocked urban interiors with glimpses through windows and doorways, of another world.

The more we investigate his work, though, the less straightforwardly delectable it becomes. Even in the Sixties, when Caulfield was rather too hastily lumped together with other, far more committed British practitioners of Pop Art, his mood remained distanced from their breathless fan-club celebration of mass culture. While relying on postcards, cartoons, tourist brochures and advertisements to develop the clean-cut style he favoured, Caulfield introduced a disquieting note as well.

The unrelieved red blaring beyond a row of comic-strip chimneys in *View of the Roof tops* has an almost incendiary impact. As well as signifying a sunset, it hints at a far greater conflagration. The year was 1965, and cold-war tensions still lurked behind the effervescence which Pop cultivated. Caulfield is too cool and oblique to deal with such anxieties directly; in 1991 he defined Pop Art as "Social Realism without emotion" and his work hides strong feeling beneath a deadpan facade. But his icon-like *Portrait of Juan Gris* hints at considerable unease as it surrounds the figure of the painter with jagged, menacing lines that seek to ensnare him. The Gris picture also implies that Caulfield's true allegiance lies with Cubism rather than Warhol — a loyalty borne out by his subsequent obsession with the twin genres of interior and still life.

The two are often combined in a single picture, like the tall, pared-down *Dining Recess* of 1972. Painted in the flat linear manner of an illustration from a cheap mail-order leaflet, this austere image has the factual bluntness of a diagram. In most of the canvas, colour is restricted to an unglamorous grey, and the plastic chairs arranged round the table could hardly be more standardised. Only the globular hanging lamp alleviates the aridity with a sudden, unexpected orb of pure white light.

After 1975, Caulfield began to move away from precise, all-over linear definition. Now areas of virtuous illusionism interrupt the



Autumn Fashion, 1978: Particularly assured, the apparently festive painting is as disturbing as a Dutch still life loaded with symbols of vanitas and mortality

diagrammatic contours. And along with the greater complexity of language, more forceful moods are sometimes explored. *Study of Roses* takes a cliché of loveliness and turns it into a jarringly alternative. The flowers are there all right, rendered so skilfully that they resemble pieces of photographic collage cut from the covers of seed catalogues and pasted onto the canvas. But they are, in reality, the product of Caulfield's increasingly resourceful brushwork. And their prettiness is subverted by the explosion of leaves, thrusting out of their glass container with such violence that they threaten to choke the picture. As a result, the roses are stranded in a monstrous tangle of foliage.

Office Party lingers over the

aftermath of celebration, where discarded corks and abandoned peanuts are scattered among the wine bottles. Lodged in the background, and identifiable either as a view or a poster on the back wall, a strangely photographic rendering of an Italianate church appears. It looks anomalous enough to be an apparition.

Even when his paintings lack this element of unexplained intrusion, they can still exude a powerful sense of strain. Take *Still Life: Autumn Fashion*, a particularly assured performance which may well derive from an illustration for a recipe in a women's magazine.

The plump white leeks appear

tempting enough, heaped in a wicker basket at the forefront of the picture. So do two of the oysters, painted so beguilingly that we must resist the urge to reach out and try plucking them from the canvas. But the other four oysters on the same plate have turned blue, caught in the shadow cast by a wall or partition covered in a ferocious pattern.

The ambiguity of this area overturns all our confident assumptions about the interior as a whole. What exactly is this expanse of wallpaper, resting on the table and partially obscuring a kitsch ruby-coloured dish? Why does it press forward so fiercely, in a room crammed with other, equally assertive fabrics and geometric paneling? The mouth-

watering oysters become almost repellent in this strident setting. Caulfield's apparently festive painting ends up as disturbing as a Dutch still life loaded with symbols of vanitas and mortality.

All the same, his work evades decisive interpretations of all kinds. Although *Town and Country* devotes alarming expanses of space to an even more garish wallpaper, Caulfield defines it with relish rather than disdain. He savours the pattern's brazen assault on the retina, just as he enjoys juxtaposing half-a-dozen contradictory styles in a single picture. Pointillism, hard-edge abstraction, photo-realism and minimalism all jostle within this supremely accomplished image.

In recent years Caulfield has stepped up his involvement with empty space, most commandingly on immobile canvases where a few still-life objects hover weirdly in the void. I find them too large and bare for their own good, lacking the tension and complexity which gives the denser, modest-size canvases their edge. Caulfield should guard against dissipating his pictorial energy in the pursuit of monumentality, and concentrate instead on those smaller, often bitter, yet oddly enticing images, where underlying melancholy is pitched against a defiant appetite for even the most indigestible of mealtime tableaux.

• Patrick Caulfield: Paintings 1963-1992 at the Serpentine Gallery (071-402 6075) daily 10-6, until Jan 17.

ARTS BRIEFING

The right stuff for a rights rite

A DIVERSE and eccentric lineup has been organised for Amnesty International's Concert for Human Rights at the Festival Hall on Sunday night. In what is being described as a "unique fusion of classical and contemporary artists" the human rights organisation is bringing together new music specialists the Balanescu Quartet; pop singer Alison Moyet, with her new acoustic sound; and Sinéad O'Connor, the aggressive Irish pop star.

And all that is just before the interval. The evening's second half is devoted to the European premiere of *The Forest*, an orchestral work by ex-talking Head David Byrne which was inspired by 19th-century Romanticism and the Industrial Revolution.

Sunday night's fund-raising concert, the first of an intended annual series, is designed to highlight the organisation's current campaign in support of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Tickets, from £10-£25, are available from the Festival Hall (071-928 8800).

• U2 VOCALIST Bono may seem an unlikely choice as only the second man ever to grace the cover of *Vogue* magazine (the first was Terence Stamp in the Sixties). His presence in black leather and wraparound "fly" shades on the front of the December issue signals not only the magazine's new policy of courting the "youth" celebrity end of the market, but also the increasing power that fashion designers now wield in the process of rock-star image-building. The well-timed publicity coincides with U2's announcement of the so-called Zooirope 93 Tour. British dates are at Celtic Park, Glasgow (041-227 5511) on August 7; Wembley Stadium (081-900 1234) August 11 and 12; Roundhay Park, Leeds (0532 444 600) August 14; and Cardiff Arms Park (0222 644 996) August 18. Tickets are going on sale from tomorrow at 10am.

Last chance ...

IN ANOTHER man's story, a boy who was refused the hand of the girl he adores might run away with her, jump out of a top-floor window, or simply bite his fingernails in callow frustration. In Solomon Anski's classic Yiddish play, *The Dybbuk*, he dies of grief and then sets up a posthumous squat in her living body, troubling the rabbis and baffling the people. The result is one of the RSC's more eccentric ventures: a fascinating look at an alien world and mindset, staged with a stark clarity by Kane Mitchell. Ends Saturday at the Barbican Pit (071-638 8891).

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale on the melodic riches in a revival of *Annie Get Your Gun*

Heads down for a vintage singalong



"Doin' What Comes Naturally": Annie Oakley (Kim Criswell) in full cry, singing with children of the company

All right, the show has a hero who will strike all modern women, and most up-to-date men, as a creep, a weakling and a bad loser. Moreover, this revival could profitably be coarser and less eager to charm. But what about the songs? These days we are grateful if one timely number penetrates the parts behind the lobes. Thanks to the great Irving Berlin, I came out of *Annie Get Your Gun* with five or six wrying for supremacy over my personal caravans, and my drums are still sorting out the gorgeous cacophony they left behind at the Prince of Wales Theatre.

The moral of the musical belongs very much to the early Doris Day era. It is that while you can't get a man with a gun, you may win his heart by pretending to be second-best. To be fair to Annie Oakley, she pluckily resists this antique

truth, at least for a time. She betters Frank Butler, the sordid world shooting champion, in a clay-pigeon contest. She rides into Buffalo Bill's circus ring on a motorbike,

foolishly expecting Frank to applaud when she exposes his inferiority by pitting every lightbulb in the place. And she is still singing "Anything You Can Do" as the two of them prepare for the final conflict.

But then Herbert and Dorothy Fields — the libretto-writing partnership recall that nice girls do not castrate male egos. Nice girls please their men by aiming tennis balls at the net or, like Annie, consenting to use the bent gun with which well-wishers have provided her. It is hard to see why a genuinely nice girl should want a man who accepts her only after she has thrown their shooting match. It is still harder to understand how anybody could live with someone who sings that "the girl that I marry will have to be as soft and pink as a nursery", as well as "wear satin and lace".

and smell of cologne". But that is how a heroine's taste masochistically ran in the Forties, when the show first appeared.

Here John Diedrich — his long face and longer hair giving him the look of a whippet with spaniel's ears — can do little to make young Frank more appealing. Kim Criswell, who plays Annie, is a less straightforward case. She has a beautiful voice and a knack for poignancy, and she rescues two of the quieter numbers, an aw-shucks lullaby and a mournful love song, from their relative obscurity.

But when she is artlessly strutting about in a tacky smock with shot birds dangling from her waist, she seems too clean and chubby, already too near the "pink and white woman" she rightly assumes. Frank is want. Roughness and toughness are

mostly missing, and with them goes a lot of the show's bite and humour.

Moreover, Roger Redfern's production signals its tone in an opening scene full of frilly ladies, sauntering gentlemen, bouncing tots, toothsome smiles and pretty primrose houses. Though the supporting performers have their moments, and there is some spirited dancing, there is never a lot of excitement or first-hand atmosphere.

But then across the footlights there comes, lyrics glittering, the richest of hubbubs: "They Say It's Wonderful", "Doin' What Comes Naturally", "I Got the Sun in the Mornin'", "There's No Business Like Show Business", "Anything You Can Do", "You Can't Get a Man with a Gun", Match that, anybody? I thought not.

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Viennese get ready to whirl

The most famous of orchestras is about to launch a daring new touring scheme. Richard Morrison met those in charge

There is room for debate about whether James Levine — artistic director of the Metropolitan Opera, New York — is a great conductor. One can argue about whether Columbia Artists Management International are the most powerful agents in the classical music world. It is not proven, not quite, that the Vienna Philharmonic is the finest orchestra on earth.

But when all three work in cahoots, the music business stands in awe. Or adopts an uneasy scepticism. "They won't bring it off. It's madness to try in a recession," says a rival agent.

Won't bring it off? Well, it is an audacious plan. Many orchestras have realised that it makes sense to repeat their concert programmes on successive nights in different towns. The Vienna Philharmonic is doing just that — except that, with the help of Columbia Artists, its "different towns" are going to be the major musical capitals of Europe.

Thus, three times a year, the orchestra will appear in Vienna, at the Festival Hall in London, and then in Paris and Berlin, all in the course of a week with the same conductor and basically the same programme. This great scheme — codename "Eurocycle" — is launched with a Festival Hall concert on Wednesday that Levine will conduct. Strangely, considering how dominant he is in America's musical life, it will be his first British concert for 15 years.

That is not all. The Vienna Philharmonic is also planning annual series in New York and Tokyo. Never before has an orchestra set out to show itself so systematically in the most important musical centres of the world. But why are the Viennese doing it? Touring the world annually is ruinously expensive.

Walter Bloovsky, the general manager, agrees. "Economically, this project is not such a wonderful thing. In Germany, we can charge prices that cover all expenses. You cannot do that in London or New York; people are not used to high prices." Top price Festival Hall tickets will be £50. That seems a lot, but it is £10 cheaper than the orchestra charged when it visited London a couple of years ago.

"But," continues Bloovsky, "it is essential for an orchestra of our reputation to play every season in the most important centres. Let's face it.



James Levine launches the Vienna Philharmonic's series at the Festival Hall next Wednesday: his first British concert for 15 years

London is a great musical capital. If an orchestra is proud of its qualities and wants to display them, it does not need to play in Toulouse."

Is this the future: a few super-orchestras competing across the globe for concert-goers? "I hope so," says Levine, who first conducted the orchestra in 1976. "I know that the records are disseminated widely. But audiences must also hear great orchestras live."

Of course, the scheme depends on one crucial point. Audiences will only pay the asking-rate if the quality of a Vienna Philharmonic concert is measurably higher than that of the local orchestra. Try finding a musician in the Berlin, London or New York Philharmonics who will admit that this is the case. Nevertheless, the name of the Vienna Philharmonic still has a magic, much analysed in its 150th anniversary year. How do the Viennese themselves account for that?

"We are an orchestra that puts tradition first," says Bloovsky. "There is a special way of Viennese string-playing, but also there are typical instruments: the Viennese horn, very

dangerous to play; the Viennese oboe,

which sounds a bit like a baroque oboe; the brass instruments which have wider bores than elsewhere and so sound less strident. Some people say that the whole orchestra is soft in focus. But that's our tradition and that's the way it will stay."

How does this tradition get passed on? Werner Ressel, the orchestra's president, points out that the orchestra can use its role performing in the pit for the Vienna State Opera as a training ground. "Young colleagues must play 150 times a year in the opera. After a season or two, it is impossible to play differently from your neighbour."

Has the orchestra never recruited a young firebrand who wants to change everything? "It happens," says Bloovsky, his voice

surely more energetic than the name of the Vienna Philharmonic.

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MOTORING

A right to range on the wrong track?

An ancient path has become a battleground between walkers and motorised thrill-seekers. Kevin Eason reports from the Ridgeway

An ancient road trodden by Stone Age man will this weekend reverberate to the sound of the petrol engine and churning wheels as town dwellers test the performance of increasingly popular four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The Ridgeway is thought to be the oldest road in Europe, stretching 85 miles through some of the most beautiful countryside in England, from Hertfordshire to Wiltshire.

Along its length are traces of mankind dating back 5,000 years and beyond: there are Iron Age forts and evidence of the many battles that took place between Saxons and Vikings.

However, this weekend and every weekend, the Ridgeway is the scene of another conflict — this time between man and machine.

Ramblers complain that they take their lives in their hands every time they set out to walk the tree-lined route for bouncing along beside them is likely to be a convoy of Land-Rovers, Mitsubishi, Suzukis and other vehicles.

Apart from the noise and disturbance, those big vehicles are churning up areas of the route which are little more than a grass track.

Councils and footpath groups tried asking owners to stop using the Ridgeway on Sundays and bank holidays but with no luck. Now they are hoping that the outcome of a three-week public enquiry just ended will be a permanent ban. Even if a ban is imposed, it will come too late to save the 42-mile stretch of the so-

There is a conflict of interest among users'

called "green lane" — which is open to vehicles — from another winter of being churned up. Michael F. Davies, the inspector, is not expected to report his findings until January. The transport department is then expected to take another two months to reach a decision.

The Countryside Commission says that the delay will mean the route will be deeply rutted while ramblers face another winter of trying to avoid vehicles ploughing along the muddy pathway.

The conflict between walkers and the motor vehicle in the countryside has nowhere been better highlighted than during the enquiry. The stretch from Streatley, close to the Thames, down to Overton Hill in Wiltshire, has always been open to vehicles even though the Ridgeway is little more than a tree-lined grass track up to 30ft wide in places.

It is a popular walk for ramblers and families out for weekend picnics who have, in the past, been used to dodging motorcyclists using specially designed "scrambling" machines. However, the remarkable growth in sales of four-

wheel-drive vehicles has hastened the demand for controls on access.

Even though the new car market in Britain is in deep recession, sales of four-wheel-drive leisure vehicles have soared by 40 per cent this year. Fewer than 10,000 vehicles were sold in 1986 — this year that figure will easily top 30,000. The motor industry jokes that the nearest most of those vehicles with huge wheels and fat tyres get to driving off-road is parking on the pavement outside a wine bar.



Ignoring the hint to the chagrin of hikers, a four-wheel-drive vehicle uses the Ridgeway as a testing ground for the car's off-road capabilities

Many owners, however, are not content with toddling around town; they want to get their vehicles splashed with mud. Unfortunately, their fun is too often at the cost of the environment. According to the commission, the fashion has spawned so many motorists who want to test their four-wheel-drives in difficult terrain that large numbers of them flock to the country-

side to bump along bridleways and ancient tracks.

David Coleman, southeast regional officer for the commission, says: "These drivers like testing conditions and getting stuck in the mud, but there is a conflict of interest because they are there at the expense of the upkeep of the Ridgeway. Walkers and horse riders also find it difficult because they

have to keep avoiding vehicles which come bouncing past."

Land-Rover is acutely aware of the problems of driving off-road and issues guidance to drivers with all of its new vehicles. So does Mitsubishi with its popular Shogun series and Toyota. But all three admit that there is little they can do if drivers refuse to heed their tips.

Nick Argent, Land-Rover's press

officer, says: "We are conscious that there can be a conflict and we try to advise owners of Land-Rovers to be aware of the environment and that driving off-road does not mean speeding around the countryside recklessly. There is a sensible way of driving off-road and drivers have to be aware of where they are and what damage they may be causing otherwise they spoil not only the

countryside but the activity of off-road driving for everyone."

Until the enquiry announces its result, the choice lies with the off-roaders. The Barbour jacket and green welly brigade can give up their Ridgeway rides and allow walkers to roam more freely along the path — or they can carry on and turn one of Europe's most ancient walkways into a winter quagmire.

Beware... driver otherwise engaged

Doitness, daftness and downright dangerousness seem to characterise the British motorist, according to new research. An extraordinary 21 per cent of drivers admit to having had intimate physical contact with a passenger while on the move. Male drivers seem the worst offenders: 28 per cent said they had had mobile relations with women. Only 18 per cent of women admitted to the same with men.

The confessions form part of new statistics showing how hopeless the average driver is when it comes to concentrating on the road ahead. Almost two-thirds of motorists admit to taking their eyes off the road to adjust their radio, change a cassette or find a sweet and 42 per cent admit to reading a map while driving.

The findings, from the Guild of Experienced Motorists together with Welcome Break Service Areas, also dis-

pel the myth that it is only foreign motorists who gesticulate wildly when fury overcomes their driving cool.

Almost half the drivers questioned say they gesticulate at fellow motorists when annoyed, 71 per cent rant obscenely while behind the wheel and half honk their horn. A braver, or more foolish, 9 per cent of motorists become so aggravated that they actually get out of their cars to remonstrate with other motorists. Again, men offend the most.

Three-quarters of motorists admit to driving above the legal speed limit on motorways and 14 per cent admit to going faster than 85mph.

In the report, police and motoring organisations deplore even more bizarre motoring practices, such as the woman driver in the outside lane of the motorway with a mobile phone in one hand, and with the other hand making notes on a pad. Her

knees were doing the presumably unimportant work of steering.

Police also had to speak in severe terms to an old man spotted causing a long tailback on a motorway. His right leg was in plaster and when the police made him pull over, they noticed he was operating the accelerator and brake pedals with his walking stick.

There was some encouraging news. The report found that 99 per cent of motorists do slow down in bad weather, and 86 per cent say they never ignore fatigue, pulling in for a break or refreshing drink or meal when tired.

The most popular way to combat fatigue on the move is to wind down the window (91 per cent), listen to music (87 per cent) or stop at a service station (89 per cent).

VAUGHN FREEMAN



On course for better economy

Low cost drives the design of two new off-road vehicles.

Vaughn Freeman tests a Range Rover and Frontera

sor, which used a cruder Italian-built diesel unit.

Some things have not changed. There are now many four-wheel drive vehicles that are cheaper than a Range Rover. But few, if any, challengers come anywhere near trying to lift the Solihull car's crown for off-road capability.

The 2.5-litre, turbocharged 200Tdi engine has been taken from Land-Rover's hugely successful Discovery. The increased sophistication is necessary, says Graham Morris, Rover Europe's managing director. Customers increas-

ingly demand diesel engines without the noise and clatter normally associated with them.

Three years ago, diesel Range Rovers accounted for only 5 per cent of the cars sold in the UK. That has since risen to 10 per cent and is expected soon to top 15 per cent.

When I tested the car, it seemed to rattle as much as most diesels first thing on a cold morning. At motorway speeds, however, I found the cabin to be a lot quieter, meaning that conversation is relaxed without the need to raise voices.

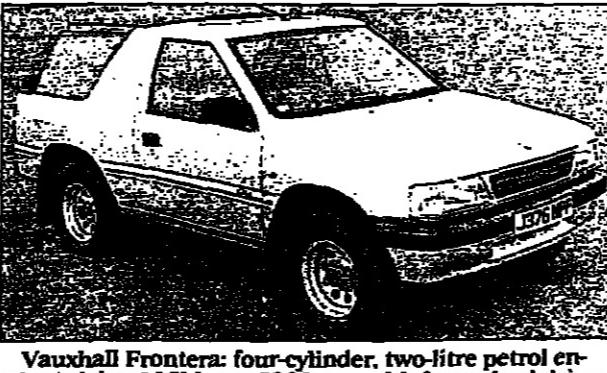
The car still seems to wander at speed and pitches and rolls a bit on undulating surfaces. The ride is comfortable and the driving position commanding. Off the road, the Range Rover Vogue Tdi comes into its own.

The diesel engine, with its high compression, gives excellent engine braking on even the most slippery hill and the unbeatable four-wheel drive allows the car to go virtually anywhere.

On the other hand, for the price of the Tdi Vogue you could have two Frontera Sports from Vauxhall and, with the change, afford a cruise in the West Indies.



Range Rover Vogue Tdi: four-cylinder, 2.5-litre direct injection turbocharged diesel engine, giving 111bhp at 4000rpm with four-wheel drive; performance 0-60mph in 17 seconds, top speed 94mph; 41mpg at 50mph, 33mpg in town and 29mpg at 75mph; price £26,783



Vauxhall Frontera: four-cylinder, two-litre petrol engine, giving 115bhp at 5200rpm with four-wheel drive; performance 0-60mph in 14.3 seconds, top speed 96mph; (unladen) 23mpg around town, 23mpg at 50mph and 23mpg at 75mph; price £11,950

Italian Job in the frame again



Stepping back: the new Mini evokes memories of the 1960s

dark 1275cc A-series engine is good for only 50bhp and 87mph. A better choice might have been the more powerful and more suitable 63bhp Cooper S.

The Mini Italian Job Special is £700 more than the basic Mini Sprite and only £1,000 less than a new Mini Cooper.

For the purist Italian Job obsessive, the Cooper, which with a few extra lights and bonnet straps could be made to look and perform like Michael Caine's very own, might be worth the extra.

VF

ROADWISE

Japanese triumph

THE British-built Nissan Micra has been voted 1993 Car Of The Year. Built at Nissan's Sunderland plant, the Micra is the first Japanese-built car to win the award, judged by motoring journalists throughout Europe.

Second was the Fiat Cinquecento and third Renault's Safrane, followed by Mazda's Xedos 6, and its 626, then by Toyota's Corolla.

Retro-mania

THE MG RV8, Rover's retro-classic sports car, will be among the four-wheeled stars featuring at the National Classic Motor Show which is being held over at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre tomorrow and Sunday.

The organisers call the show "a time warp for the motoring mad" and features Riley's to Triumph Stags.

French finesse

FORGET Teutonic reputations for reliability. The Adas, the German equivalent of the AA, says the Renault 19 is Europe's most reliable lower-medium-size car.

The Renault was the small saloon least likely to bother the Adas breakdown and recovery teams. It also won the coveted 1992 Golden Steering Wheel award from *Bild am Sonntag*, the prestige German magazine.

Sheepish?

YOU ARE driving along an empty country road when

your car hits a deer that leaps out in front of you. Must you report the incident to the police? The answer is No. But if you had hit a sheep, you would have to tell the constabulary.

If your grasp of motoring law is as feeble as mine, *The Pocket A to Z of Motoring Law*, covering everything from fines to offences is for you.

• Free from *Chausseurplan*, 17A Curzon Street, London W1Y 8AQ.

Gift of go

IF YOU are stuck for a Christmas gift idea for older children this year, why not give a service, suggests the Retail Motor Industry Federation, which represents 12,000 dealers and garages nationwide.

Every year, 35 per cent of cars fail the roadworthiness test, which largely assesses a car's safety. The federation suggests that most failures are of cars owned by students, or young drivers in low-paid work. The gift of an MoT could prevent a breakdown, and even an accident.

INFOTECH

Clive Couldwell explains why corporations want to link their names with arts and sports sponsorship



On the ball: London Monarchs footballers with cheer leaders, sponsored by Tandem Computers



In tune: the European Community Youth Orchestra rehearses, sponsored by Digital Equipment

You have seen it on the television or in the news-papers and probably spotted it in the foyer of the theatre. Despite the recession, arts sponsorship is a booming business.

And strangely, perhaps, it is often hi-tech companies that are pumping large sums of money into a variety of plays, dance and films. Such corporations believe that an involvement with the arts can influence the way in which the public, business clients and even their own employees perceive the company's image.

It is not a one-sided arrangement. In return for funding, theatres have been able to stage plays, ballet companies afford to go on tour and struggling artists, dancers and musicians receive training.

"With reduced public funding, sponsors are becoming the modern-day Medicis," argues Ian Spero, the managing director of Spero Communications, a European sponsorship and marketing communications company.

For information technology companies in particular, it is becoming difficult to create strong branding. There is often, and increasingly, little difference between products, leading to suppliers having to come

up with a different approaches to their marketing. In this field, sponsorship is seen as a powerful communications tool.

Some companies see sponsorship as a way they can "borrow" certain values of the arts — quality, variety, visual appeal and imagery — which they hope will then be seen as an integral part of that company's culture.

The arts can also offer excellent opportunities for corporate hospitality — an important requirement in an industry whose relationships with key customers are based on a close association.

Digital Equipment, for example, is spending £3 million on an arts sponsorship programme.

"A recession is the very time when you want to make sure you are in front of those you want to do business with," says Geoff Shingles, the chairman of Digital

Equipment. Other computer and communications companies have also caught the bug. NCR is heavily involved with theatre, symphony and literature. The NCR Book Award is the largest non-fiction award of its kind in the UK.

AT&T also sponsors theatre and through its subsidiary, the Midlands-based Iset, is involved with the Young Musicians of the Year and several other arts activities focused in Iset's home area.

Sport is the other main area of sponsorship. Sport is much more immediate for a mass consumer market while art is more relevant if you are seeking to understand the society in which you happen to be," Dominic Fry, AT&T's director of communications, says.

"It is also good for moral-making staff aware of what the

company is doing and getting to the theatre those who would normally go."

Some hi-tech companies are convinced that sports sponsorship serves their interests better than the arts.

Mike Lambert, the head of marketing for Tandem Computers, says: "The potential number of people who are really enthusiastic to go and see an opera, ballet, or a concert, is probably not as great as those who would be genuinely interested in going to see a rugby match."

If a managing director likes golf, he will turn up for the final day of the European Open because it's a pleasure. He is relaxed and our executives and sales people can build up a relationship with him, over many hours. You cannot do that easily while watching a concert."

But whatever their preference, companies that benefit most from

sponsorship work at it. For example, Mercury Communications' sponsorship of the pop art show at London's Royal Academy included, as an integral part, the production of limited-edition Mercury telephone cards which featured visuals from the show.

The hope was that these would not only become collectors' items, but would also help differentiate Mercury cards from BT's cards.

"The sponsorship and information technology industries have comparable values. They are both innovative and young," Mr Spero says. "These companies are also inclined to adopt a more innovative approach to marketing because their businesses are at the cutting edge."

Some technology companies are also turning towards pan-European programmes. Transcending trade barriers as well as arts organisations seeking financially secure future.

At a time of recession in the UK, it could be a particularly tempting prize for those bold enough to have that crucial second crack at another market — the heart and wallet of the European buyer.

COCOM, the Western agency that once blocked sensitive technology from reaching the Soviet bloc, has laid down fairly easy guidelines for hi-tech exports to Eastern Europe. Conditions for granting "favorable consideration" to the former Communist nations demand that they set up adequate export controls, assure items are not used for military purposes, provide end-use assurances on demand and allow on-site inspections.

The guidelines will give the newly emerging democracies access to hi-tech equipment such as advanced computers and telecommunications banned to them during the Cold War.

Soft centre

One problem with renting a personal computer is that copyright restrictions usually prevent the hiring of software to go with them. Data Preference, a computer rental firm based in Teddington, west London, says it has established licensing agreements with Microsoft and Lotus that enable it to let their software to those hiring machines with a hard disc.

The minimum rental period is one week and the monthly cost of software hire ranges from 5 to 10 per cent of the purchase price of the programs.

Flat OUT

MCC, an American hi-tech consortium, is forming a group to develop ways to produce cheaper flat-panel display screens. The screens could be used for the commercial development of high-definition television, as well as for computers and other uses.

EC-Japan link

THE European Community will contribute £2.4 million to a pilot project with Japan aimed at boosting competitiveness in the field of electronic component supplies.

The EC says the effort for 1993 and 1994 will be focused on printed circuit boards and modelled on a trial project this year involving supplies of plastic moulding for consumer electronics. The trial included an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of 11 companies.

Strings to their bow

British Airways takes off with .RAM



British Airways demands the best for its passengers by constantly improving customer service and co-ordinating ground operations more effectively. Indeed, with passenger volumes set to double by the year 2000, British Airways has recognised the need for a mobile data system to give staff first hand, real-time access to information. Naturally, they saw the opportunity to combine their own business acumen and technical skills with those of RAM Mobile Data.

RAM's revolutionary public wireless data network enables British Airways to speed up ground operations. Users can now access airline systems wherever and whenever they need to. Furthermore, British Airways is taking service to the customer with applications including Mobile Check-in using hand-held terminals. Queues are becoming a thing of the past and by reducing delays and ensuring flights depart on time, British Airways is winning for customers while increasing efficiency and productivity levels.

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But who will write the plaintive headlines?

Computers may soon be correcting text far beyond the competence of present-day spelling checkers

A new development that will extend the use of computers in publishing is likely to prompt further debate on the use of information technology. The innovation is a method of automating the process of editing of newspapers, magazines, books and other reports.

The key to such automated editing is the ability of the programs to recognise when a complicated pattern of words is a clever turn of phrase or an elegant use of English, rather than an incorrect construction or a mistake. It requires software that can be both sensitive to language and capable of what researchers refer to as intelligent text processing.

Although the recent impact of technology on publishing has been breathtaking, the jobs it replaced and transformed were essentially mechanical ones in typesetting, design and printing.

The prospect of employing the computer for full text editing is being pursued by academic research at Edinburgh University's human communications research centre (HCRC).

The unit, directed by Professor Keith Stearns, comprises a team of experimenters in computer science, artificial intelligence, psychology, the use of language, neurobiology, philosophy and education.

Under development is the Editor's Assistant, a complex computer program designed to analyse fresh passages of prose. As well as detecting and correcting routine errors of spelling and grammar, it aims to remove infelicities in syntax and style.

Prototypes of the Editor's Assistant have been produced in collaboration with two companies. The prototypes are being honed for general use by editors and publishers.

Shona Douglas, one of the leading researchers on the project, says: "The aim is to design a writing aid that helps a human editor to massage text into a house style, removing errors and ensuring consistency."

"Since word-processing is one of the largest single applications of computers, the editing system is aimed at writing and publishing in the widest sense, from newspapers and magazines to desktop

publishing on personal computers and for company reports and documents."

Many word-processing packages include spelling checkers. There are also programs with limited abilities to examine grammar and style. They have rules and recognise anomalies. A sequence of two identical words, for example, a common error when keying in text, can be corrected. For consistency of style, programs have many rules. For example, one might detect, say, any measurement specified in kilometres and offer a converted measurement in miles or vice versa.

Complex questions of syntax and semantics are beyond most existing systems however, and the central idea behind automated editing is that publishers' style rules will be maintained in a computer knowledge base.

Eventually, the design of automatic editors should be able to incorporate another of the latest advances in information technology, the expert system. These learn from experience and are able to apply the knowledge gained. Such

existing checkers should be able to spot a split infinitive, highlight the use of the active rather than passive voice and discard nouns formed from verbs. But existing systems would fail if asked, for example, to analyse and verify the structure of a sentence such as: "Each one of the sixteen cats raised by John and Mary is on the table."

In practice, when using the Editor's Assistant to apply the style rulebook, excerpts regarded as questionable are highlighted on the screen. A panel or menu of options then appears.

For a simple query, the choice on offer may be to substitute highlighted words with suggested replacements or by something else, ignore the rule this time, or disable the rule for this text.

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Screens of protest over rules

New regulations on computer work practice are meeting opposition, reports Matthew May

Tougher regulations for the use of computer screens announced by the health and safety commission last week have immediately been criticised by unions as not going far enough.

The rules will come into effect on January 1 to fulfil Britain's obligations to implement a European Community directive on working with display screen equipment. Key aims are to reduce eye strain, backache and particularly repetitive strain injury (RSI) among the seven million employees who now use computer screens.

Specifically the regulations require employers to:

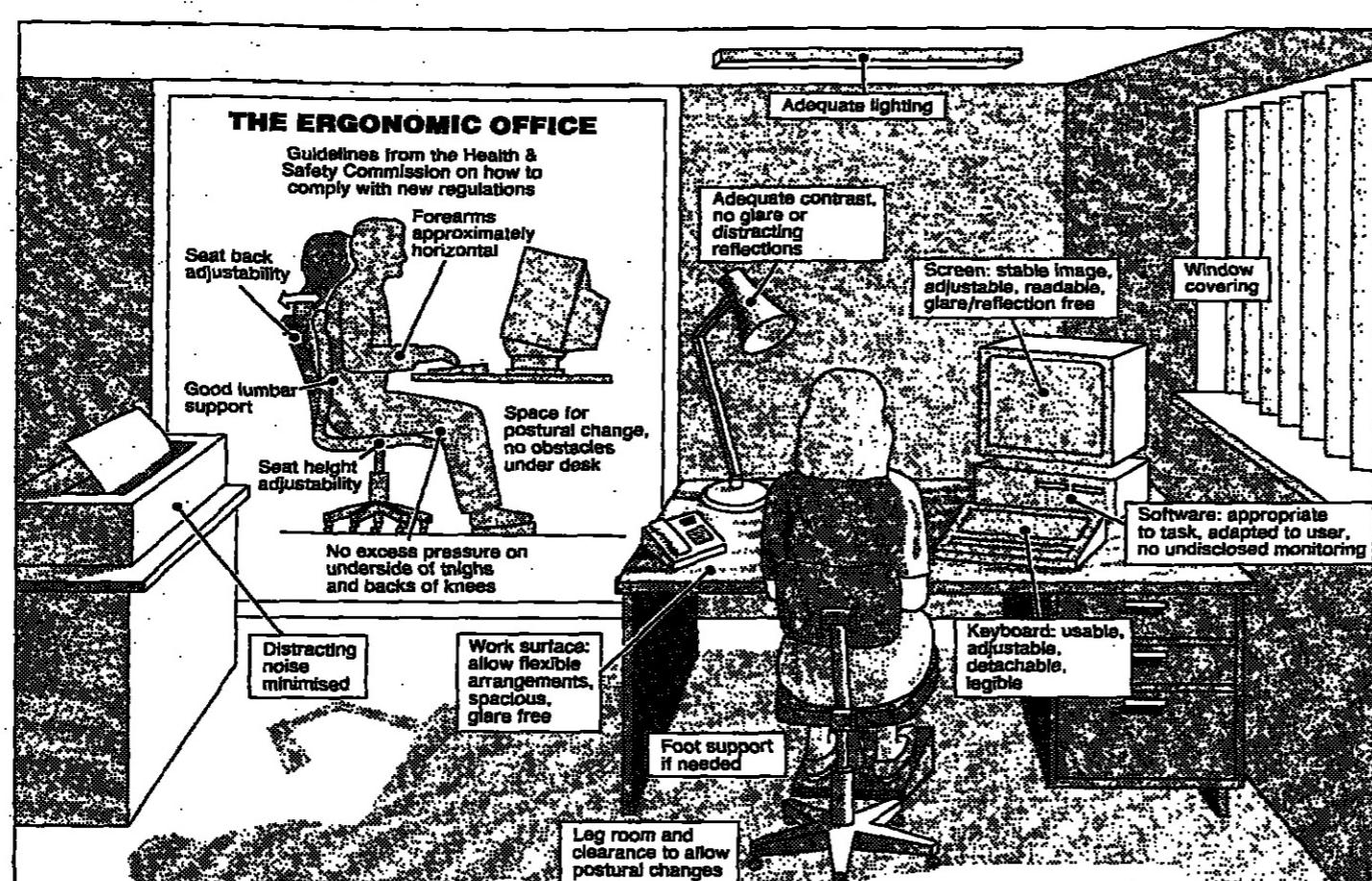
- assess workstations and reduce any risks found;
- ensure that workstations meet specified minimum requirements;
- plan display screen work so there are breaks or changes of activity;
- provide information and training for users;
- give eyesight tests to any users who request them;
- pay for special spectacles if they are required.

The new legislation will apply only where computer screens are "habitually used" by employees, which the National Union of Communications argues does not cover all employees using computer screens and risks the government being taken before the European Court of Justice. The union says: "The regulations encourage two different standards of workstation within one workplace — one for workers who use display screen equipment for a significant part of their normal work" and the other for the rest of us." The union adds that without a clear definition of who is or is not a user in the eyes of the law, unscrupulous employers could be tempted to operate to the lowest standards they can.

Earlier this year, the union took BT to court over computer-related injuries. It estimates there may be 100,000 people suffering from various RSIs.

Ian Galer, the chairman of the Ergonomics Society, says: "One has to draw a line somewhere and in particular protect people who use this sort of equipment intensively. The most obvious example is high-speed data entry — typing data into a system very quickly."

The HSC, for example, recom-



mends five to ten minute breaks every hour for those doing continuous screen or keyboard work as better than a 15-minute break every two hours. Under the regulations, workstations introduced after January 1 will have to conform to them immediately, but existing ones, or those installed on or before December 31 1992, will have until the end of 1996 to comply.

Exactly what some of the regulations will require seems, however, to be very much open to interpretation. On the amount of screen flicker acceptable for a workstation, for example, the HSC recommends that "a screen which is flicker-free for 90 per cent of users should be regarded as satisfying the minimum requirement".

"Many businesses view the new legislation as a threat as well as potentially expensive," John Arnell,

There is no need to reduce radiation levels or to measure emissions'

ICL's personal business systems manager, says: "Using the Scandinavian example, ergonomics should be viewed as an opportunity to improve productivity. The new regulations are inadequate in their definition and leave a lot of things open to question. They do not make sufficient reference to standards."

One thing the HSC is unequivocal about is that there is no danger of harmful radiation from the current designs of computer

screens and that pregnant women do not need to stop working with them. The HSC says: "It is not necessary from the standpoint of limiting risk to human health for employers or workers to take any action to reduce radiation levels or to attempt to measure emissions — in fact, the latter is not recommended, as meaningful interpretation of data is very difficult."

There is no need for users to be given protective devices such as anti-radiation screens.

Controversial claims that radiation from computer screens may increase the risk of miscarriages or other ills are unproven. But some other European countries, such as Sweden, take the attitude that though radiation from computers has not been proven as dangerous, it cannot be shown to be totally safe. Hence they recommend the use of low-emission equipment.

Many experts are also convinced that if there is an increased incidence of miscarriages from intensive work with computer screens, it is far more likely to do with ergonomic factors, such as bad seating, than radiation.

The average cost of implementing the new regulations was originally put at £42 a workstation by

the HSC when draft guidelines were issued earlier this year. Now it is estimated that the true figure may be closer to £70, although ergonomists argue that as employers conform with the legislation, a likely reduction in the amount of sick leave taken should more than cover the cost.

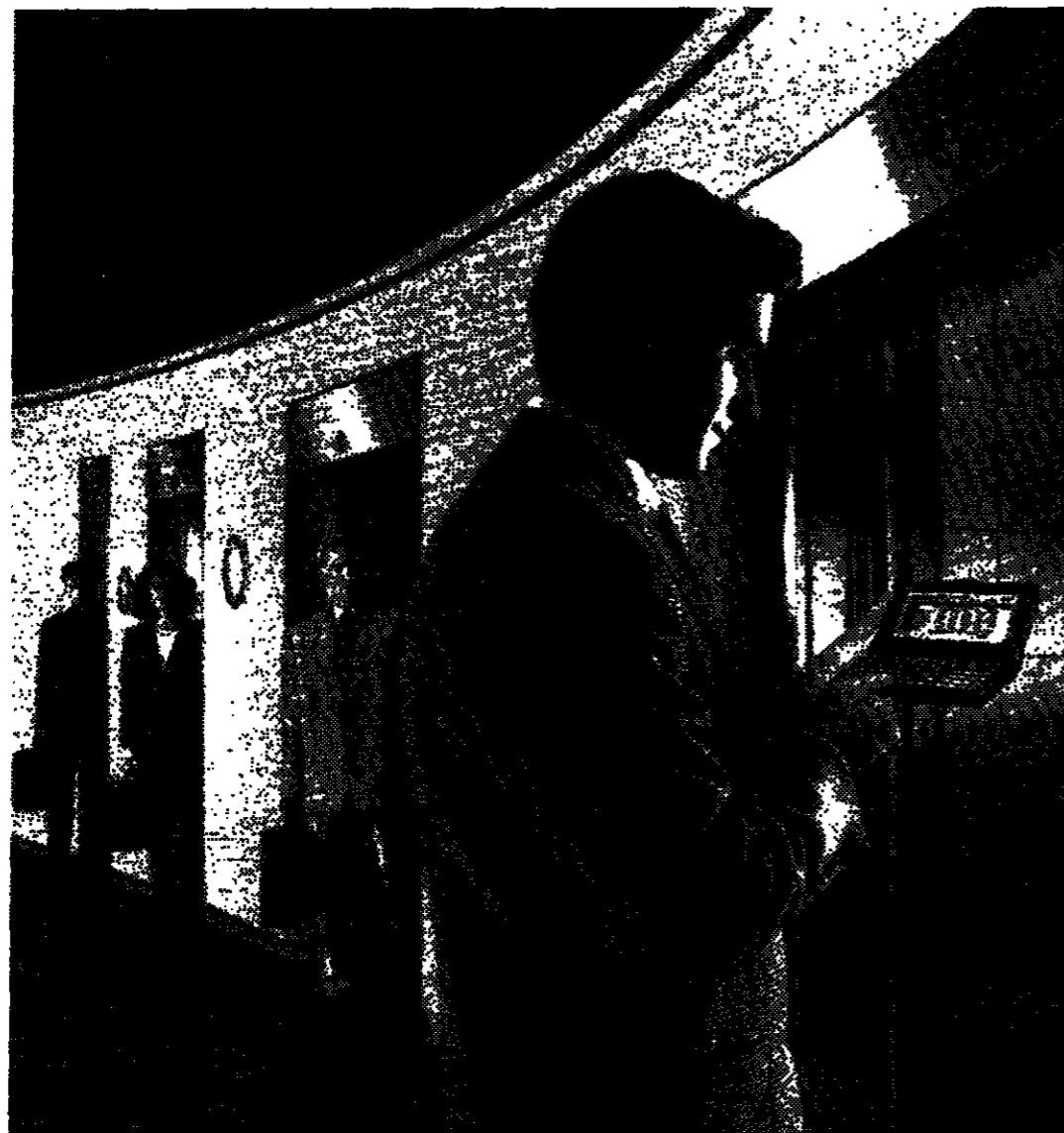
Ergonomists are also convinced that any punitive action by inspectors is feared far less by many employers than the sort of court cases where employees are suing over having contracted injuries from computer work. Nearly half the claims for worker compensation in the United States are now believed to be related to ergonomics.

Mr Galer says that an increasing number of claims is being made in Britain.

"The going rate for compensation seems to be about £45,000," he adds. "If employers can show they have at least observed these new minimum requirements, it will obviously make their defence stronger."

• Copies of Display Screen Equipment Guidance on Regulations are available, price £5, from HMSO or through bookellers. Copies of a shorter booklet, Working with VDUs, are available free from 0742-892346.

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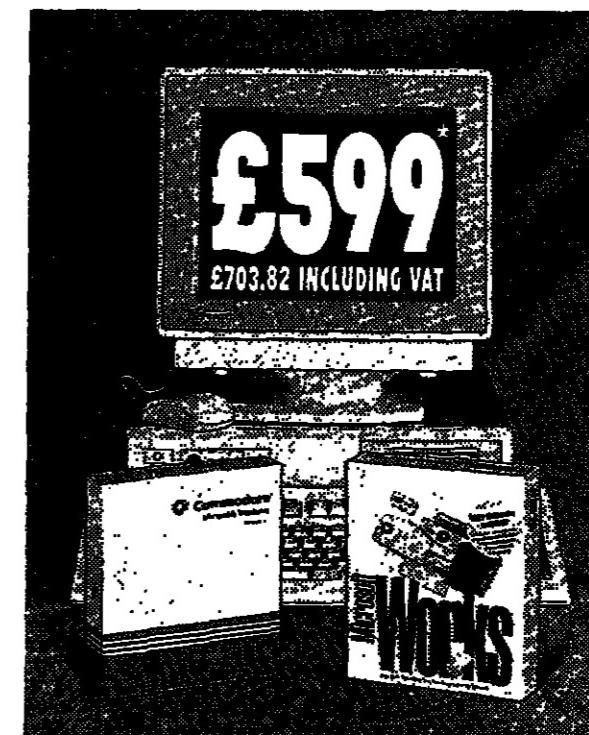
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Dimensions and returns are both diminishing

The latest electronic gadgetry is going from the miniature to the minuscule

A tiny tape recorder, which stores up to two hours of digital stereo sound on a cassette the size of a postage stamp, is now on sale from Sony.

The recorder, aimed at the dictation market, is the latest in a continuing run of developments which has seen designers squeeze more and more features into smaller and lighter consumer electronics equipment.

However, magnetic computer discs and optical recording systems such as the compact disc will probably be replaced one day by solid-state memory chips. Some portable computers already use memory cards, which are about the size of a credit card, to store data. But solid-state memory stores are expensive: prices range from £50 to £1,500, and the largest cards at present available can hold only about 20 megabytes of data.

Fuji has introduced digital still-video cameras in America and Japan that store images on a memory chip. The magnetic tape company TDK has moved into the memory-card business by developing a new type of smart card.

"The memory-card market is set to grow, but don't expect to find your favourite artist's latest recording on a memory chip for a long while yet," says Martyn Williams, TDK's technical manager in the UK.

Roy Cannell, marketing manager of JVC's compact video system division, adds a word of caution on the drive for greater miniaturisation. "We have the technology to produce even smaller consumer electronics equipment, but you have got to ask how small do we really want to go?"

"A video camera that is the size of a sugar cube might be an impressive technical feat, but it would not be so great to use."

GEORGE COLE

Barbarians make use of video aid to plan for game at Twickenham

Australians adopt no-risk policy

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

AUSTRALIA, fitting one more match into their hectic social round at the climax of the tour of Ireland and Wales, named yesterday their most powerful XV for the game against the Barbarians at Twickenham tomorrow. That it is not their international team is only because of the string of injuries they have suffered.

The changes from the team that beat Wales last Saturday are both in the pack, and both entirely deserved on overall tour performance. Troy Coker will play at lock — where he generally appears for Harlequins with whom he will resume after the tour — and Sam Scott-Young is on the open side flank.

On another tour both might have found a place in the first choice XV. As it is they have had to be largely content with propping up the midweek side. Since Coker is unlikely to appear again with his national side he will be keen to sign off on a high note on the ground where he helped Australia win the World Cup a year ago.

Indeed the whole team wants to write an emphatic autograph on the tour. "If we were going to play a heller-schleifer game we would have picked a running stand-off," John Breen, the manager, said in reference to the possibility of playing David Campese out of position.

"We will play for field position and try to develop something from there. Look at the Barbarians' team; it's not one that will take the field in heller-schleifer mood."

The Barbarians went through their "fairground" preparations at the Lenbury club yesterday. Part of those preparations have involved watching a video prepared by Mike Ruddick, the Swansea coach, who showed it to his club side before their win over the Australians at St Helens.

The video offers an insight into Australian weaknesses which seem, to most outsiders to be glossed over quite efficiently when it most matters.

That the Barbarians are as keen to win as Australia is not



Ready to fire: Campese takes a break from training at the Honourable Artillery Company ground yesterday

in doubt. "We want to enjoy ourselves but we want to win and we have devised a game plan accordingly," Will Carling, their captain, said. "It's not run at all costs. Both sides have the same problem, that it's not an international, but we would love to beat them. They're world champions, aren't they? They're at the end of a long, hard two years, but it's very difficult for a scratch side to play against a team like them. But if we click, I think we will push them very hard."

The Rugby Football Union, preparing for a second capacity crowd in a fortnight, has taken steps to avoid the problems evident on the new East stand during England's game against South Africa. A

monitoring system has been approved and will be enforced on the day as necessary.

"If a problem were to arise and people had to leave the East stand quickly they could always go onto the pitch in a few seconds," Roger Godfrey, the RFU's administrative secretary, said.

He pointed out that bad weather on November 14 had contributed to overcrowding in the walkway under the stand because spectators were sheltering from the rain before taking their seats in the exposed bottom tier.

AUSTRALIAN XV: M Roebuck, P Carozza, J Lima, R McWhinney, W Flanagan, P Keigh, P Scott, D Campbell, T Coker, S Scott-McKerrow, R McColl, T Coker, S Scott-Young, W Oshagawa, T Gavir, R Gavir, R Mackellar, A Bent, T Maher, D Smith, D Nuccio, A Blaize, W Waugh.

AFTER yet another domestic upheaval this week, Bernard Lapasset, the president of the French federation (FFR), may find Twickenham a comparatively peaceful haven when a delegation of France officials visit the Rugby Football Union (RFU) for an exchange of views (David Hands writes).

On Tuesday, Lapasset threw his weight behind Pierre Berbizier, the embattled France coach, and found himself without a team manager when Robert Paparemborde resigned.

Lapasset and his FFR colleagues — Marcel Martin (honorary secretary), Jean-

Louis Barther (administrative secretary) and Jacques Talmier (treasurer) — will be given a presentation by the RFU on the marketing of the game, development programmes and the role of Twickenham.

They will join the RFU executive committee, further cementing an understanding that began last season under the presidency of Sir Peter Yarranton. "The home unions meet on a regular basis but there has not been the same closeness with the French," Dudley Wood, the RFU secretary, said. "There ought to be more frequent exchanges and a better affinity."

GOLF

Teravainen has his day in the wind

FROM MITCHELL PLATTS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN SYDNEY

PETER Teravainen, of the United States, who has travelled extensively without winning anything of note, shot a 66 to take the first-round lead in the Australian Open at The Lakes Golf Club here yesterday.

Teravainen, 36, remained composed as many of his better-known rivals were intimidated by a capricious wind and irritated by slow play. The course is particularly examining when the wind comes up, but by the end of the day it was taking almost six hours to complete a round.

Teravainen leads by one shot from Lee Janzen, another American, and the Australians, Wayne Riley, the defending champion, Peter McWhinney, Wayne Grady, Colin Montgomerie, out in 38, came back in 31, the best of the day, to lead the British challenge, ahead of Martin Gates (72), Vijay Singh, of Fiji, collected two eagles and two birdies in his last eight holes for a 70, and Raymond Floyd also took 70 despite hitting his drive left into the lake at the 1st.

Teravainen qualified for only one year on the US PGA Tour. In 1980 he made only one halfway cut in 19 tournaments. "I was ready to quit," he said. Instead, he searched for pastures new. In 1985 he competed in 42 tournaments, playing in South Africa, Asia, Europe and Australia.

Teravainen has a distinctive swing which works well in a wind. He stands a little closed and hits the ball low. The three-iron he nailed to reach

the green at the 14th was a good example of his ball-striking. The ball sailed low for 210 yards across the lake before coming to rest on the green. He two-putted for a four, which is now par for the hole because the Australian Golf Union, much to the disappointment of many of the players, decided that the hole did not warrant a par five in the championship.

Teravainen gathered seven birdies, including one at the 16th, described as one of the best par-fours in Australia with its dog-leg to the right and two lakes in play. As the wind picked up, he drilled a five-iron 175 yards to within 15 feet of the hole.

Riley had seven birdies and Grady, after missing three successive cuts, had six birdies.

Montgomerie took three putts at the 4th and 5th and missed from two feet at the 9th. The Scot regained his faith by holing from ten feet and 20 feet for birdies at the 10th and 11th, and birdied the last three holes. He holed from 40 feet at the 16th, chipped close at the 17th, and hit a five-iron to within five feet at the 18th.

LEADING FIRST ROUND SCORES (US\$ 67,000). Lee Janzen (72), Peter McWhinney (72), Wayne Riley (72), Vijay Singh (70), Raymond Floyd (70), Martin Gates (72), T. Gavir (72), D. Scott (72), P. Teravainen (66), P. Keigh (72), D. Campbell (72), T. Coker (72), S. Scott (72), P. Carozza (72), R. Mackellar (72), R. Nuccio (72), A. Bent (72), T. Maher (72), D. Smith (72), A. Blaize (72), W. Waugh (72).

er of the House to seek an adjournment debate to raise this important issue. Without a change in the law, land which communities have always assumed to be safe could be in peril.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID SHAW,
House of Commons.

From Mr Edward Grayson
Sir, Over the NPFA annual conference hovered the shadow of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's unconcealed advice that local authorities should balance their budgets by selling off council-owned playing fields. Yet where was any minister from the Department of Education and Science?

At present, there are nearly 3,000 such recreation grounds protected by registrations with the Charity Commissioners, but there are many more which were set aside for public recreational use and unfortunately never formally protected in this way.

These include over 900 sites, mainly owned by local authorities, which were assisted by the NPFA in the 1920s and 1930s.

In every case, financial assistance was originally given on the understanding that land would be secured "in perpetuity". But some local authorities are now challenging their previous commitments.

I have written to the Speaker-

reply was: "No. Why should there be? We haven't got one for maths or Latin."

Since then, of course, Mr Major has kicked the constitutional status and role of a junior minister connected with sport out of the Department of the Environment along the corridors of power via the Department of Education and Science, and, together with arts and old buildings into the grandiose title of National Heritage.

This sport within government still lacks the "coherent body of doctrine" and "philosophy of government encouragement" outlined by Lord Hailsham 30 years ago. It will be implemented only if sufficient individual MPs and the public can persuade the bureaucrats and an apparently uncaring government to preserve the most precious jewel in any British national heritage crown: its playing fields and their associated traditions.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
EDWARD GRAYSON,
4 Paper Buildings, EC4.

At centre stage

From Mr D. B. L. George
Sir, I agree with the view expressed by Arthur Rees in your tribute to him and Wilfred Wooler (November 20) that Wooler was one of the best all-round sportsmen Wales has produced.

My old headmaster at Friars School, Bangor, Ivor Williams, would have concurred in his telling me about a rugby match between Friars and Rydal School which took place in the early 1930s.

Probably in order to make a game of it, Wooler was selected at full back for the match against Friars rather than his normal position of centre. This was, of course, long before the advent of the running full back. At half-time, with the score 0-0, Rydal decided that Wooler should revert to centre. The full-time score was 104-0.

I checked the score in the school magazine and I have no reason to doubt Mr Williams's recollection of the details. What Wooler might have achieved if the war had not taken away the best years of his life as a sportsman is anybody's guess.

Yours faithfully,
D. B. L. GEORGE,
72 Hillier Road, SW11.

Over the top

From Mr M. Grosvenor Myer
Sir, I have just watched Internazionale VAC Milan on Channel 4. It should have been a rewarding piece of viewing, but it proved impossible to concentrate on the play.

The reason was the incessant wittering of the commentator, who appeared intent on informing us of everything: the biography of the referee, the coaches, and every player who came within 10 yards of the ball; the climactic conditions; the possible implications of every move — except what was actually happening, which we could have seen for ourselves anyhow.

Would it be too much to ask of the networks to request their commentators to confine themselves to the occasional information as to who has possession, etc., essential for an appreciation of the game? Turning down the sound robs one of the reactions of the crowd, which are an essential part of watching a match.

I realise that commentators like to feel they are justifying their presence, but if I were listening to a concert, I should not be grateful for a constant voice-over of:

"This is the fifteenth time

Pozzetto has conducted this symphony, the baton he is using is one of the new lightweight polychromatic type. Magnus, the first trombone you just heard, spent the winter of 1988-9 playing third cornet for the Albuquerque Philharmonic, Otto, what did you think of the violins' technique on that modulation to the tonic minor at the beginning of the trout?"

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL GROSVENOR
MYER,

34 West End,
Hadrian Road,
Cambridge.

Worst behaviour

From Mr David Hunn
Sir, What is it that causes so many Welsh rugby spectators to behave so appallingly at international matches? Their appreciation of the game is more finely tuned than that of supporters from any other nation and yet their lack of sportsmanship is consistently sickening.

There is nothing new in this. The massed chorus of derisory whistles for the opposition goal-kicker greeted Bob Hillier as rancorously 20 years ago as it did Marty Roebuck.

Rugby presents the game time forgot

Tomorrow we have one of the year's more incongruous and embarrassing sporting occasions: the touring Australians play the Barbarians in the final match of their tour. It is rather as if cricket's Gentlemen v Players match were to be revived.

This fixture is not really part of modern sport. More's the pity, some will say. The Barbarians are about style: a belief that victory is not the most important thing in sport, and that sport is not the most important thing in life. So do you do best and have a good time and you have a few drinks before and a few more afterwards and it's all absolutely lovely.

We play like that at Twickenham. Irregulars. Need I say more?

The Barbarian tradition has its roots in the archetype of the gentleman amateur: the C. B. Fry thing. Fry captained Oxford at football, cricket and athletics, represented England at all three, headed the first-class averages six times, held the world long jump record, was a classical scholar, a writer, a polymath.

Hard training was actually morally unsound. It was taking an unfair advantage.

The Corinthian of my day never trained," said G. O. Smith, a player renowned for his languid saunter. He played, of course, for Corinthian Casuals, who used to withdraw their goalkeeper when they conceded a penalty. That has something of the Barbarian style about it.

The gentleman amateur is an archetype: a person, above all, who *played* the game. He would arrive, no doubt with a cigarette in his mouth (probably in a holder) and an opened bottle of champagne in his hand, saunter on to the pitch, score a hundred, or take a hat-trick, languidly change and then drive off in a carriage to the House of Commons to govern the country.

Above all, the gentleman amateur, like the Barbarian, preferred style to content. It mattered not who won or lost, but how he played the game. Sport was just a part of the way the whole man lived life.

Really, one's heart goes out to the Australians. At the end of a long tour, injury-hampered and sweat-soaked, they must stay on for another week because of English rugby's nostalgia for the Victorian age.

You may think that the Victorians and the Barbarians had or have the right perspective. You may also think that the world was a safer place in the 12th century when the Catholic Church was the dominant power in Europe. You could argue either point convincingly, but in both cases, it would be an academic argument.

It is a label that all pros dread. Many athletes these days take special pains to come over as blinkered professionals. A person with wider horizons than sport is likely to be mistrusted by management, colleagues, and the public. To be a person of a larger world was never much help to Phil Edmonds, or Pat Nevin.

Virtue is mistrusted. People prefer an athlete to prove that he, or she, is very good at one thing, and one thing only.

It is true that many of the top rugby players still have jobs outside sport. But many would not be where they are without their ability to play the rugby card. A modern rugby player is no amateur: he is an amphibian who lives in two professional worlds. Rugby is a serious business, and it is played with a blinding intensity that makes the international game a compelling spectacle.

The Barbarian game is an anachronism. It's an intriguing one. Poor old Australia. It's 80° in Sydney and no doubt the sun's up. It seems hard to make them roll about in the mud of an English November in support of the pomico nostalgia for the age of dilettantism.

SPORTS LETTERS

Apathy threat to angling

From Mr T. C. H. King

Sir, Brian Clarke's admirable article on the future of fishing (November 18) raised one of angling's greatest problems: apathy amongst the great majority of anglers towards our key issues.

The fact is that there is no umbrella organisation which can address the key issues, a job which the now defunct National Anglers' Council (NAC) could have undertaken. As a former chairman of one NAC member organisation (the Anglers' Co-operative Association), I am one of those guilty of letting the NAC be disbanded and the present unsatisfactory situation develop.

However, there have been some recent discussions over the setting up of an Angling Development Agency, under the auspices of the Sports Council, and which may be useful and relevant.

The real need is for an umbrella organisation to co-ordinate angling's resources to address the issues of water abstraction and pollution, pirate salmon-fishing, genetic pollution of wild fish stocks and the insidious erosion of ethics for personal gain.

I cannot disagree that the Football Association could have done more over the years, but lately we have been taking strong action.

For example, we have held clubs responsible for brawls by deducting championship points, not selected players for

FA defends game's standards

From the Chief Executive of The Football Association

Sir, In response to David Miller's article (Football's governing body guilty by association, November 25), the Football Association does accept its responsibilities for maintaining the image of the game and upholding standards of behaviour and discipline.

I cannot disagree that the Football Association could have done more over the years, but lately we have been taking strong action.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM KELLY,
Chief Executive,
The Football Association,
16 Lancaster Gate, W2.

Jones's service

From Mr Kenneth E. Pottle

Sir, Your report (November 18) of the fine on Vinnie Jones seems to corroborate the Football Association's finding of "bullying the game into disrepute" through involvement in the video, Soccer's Hard Men, which glorifies violence in the game.

There is an argument for exposure of the practices as well as other areas of competition in the game.

Yours truly,
KENNETH E. POTTLE,
Basilton, Essex.

From Mr J. H. Mathews

Travelling Wrong to fulfil Chepstow debut promise

RICHARD Dunwoody can consolidate his lead at the top of the jockeys' table by landing a double at Newbury today on Major Bugler (12.5f) and Travelling Wrong (1.25f).

Travelling Wrong, my nap to win the Oxfordshire Novices' Chase, was bought during the summer by one of jumping's greatest stalwarts, Brigadier Roscoe Harvey, after he had won all of his four point-to-points in Ireland last season.

As that was not a fine recommendation in itself, Travelling Wrong also has a splendid jumping pedigree since he is a half-brother to those good hunter chasers, Green Bay and It's The Only Way, by the successful stallion, Strong Gale.

Running for the first time for his new owner and trainer, David Nicholson, Travelling Wrong won decisively over three miles at Chepstow where, on soft ground, he accounted for the subsequent Ascot winner Arno Chilone.

Faced with the choice of riding Travelling Wrong or Vicompt De Valmont, on whom he won the Sonning Novices' Hurdle on this programme 12 months ago, Dunwoody picked the former.

Significantly, he was on Vicompt De Valmont at Wolverhampton earlier this month when he was runner-up to Auk Eye in his first race over fences.

While that was quite a promising effort, it still did not

MICHAEL PHILLIPS

compare with Travelling Wrong's performance at Chepstow.

Major Bugler, who is taken to initiate the Dunwoody double in the Freshman's Novices' Hurdle, is rated a Triumph Hurdle prospect by Tony Balding and should be all the better for his first run over timber behind Dominant Serenade at Cheltenham 12 days ago.

With Nicholson's team going well from their new base, For The Grain is fancied to complete a stable double and make a winning seasonal reappearance under Jamie Osborne in the Jacky Upton Handicap Chase.

The eight-year-old won twice last season — over two miles at Cheltenham and over

today's distance of two and a half miles at Ascot in January.

Good Tonic, successful over today's course and distance in March, could turn out to be the main threat to For The Grain as he will undoubtedly strip fitter for his first run of the season at Huntingdon where he finished fifth behind Emsee-H.

Nikitas, trained locally by Avery Whitfield, looks the safest bet to win the Birmingham Handicap Hurdle given his admirable victory in similar ground at Haydock a fortnight ago.

On that occasion, Nikitas

finished seven and a half lengths ahead of Kayak, who was favourite after a promising first run behind Mighty Mogul over today's course and distance.

While conceding that a mistake at the last flight did not help Kayak's cause that day, they were meeting at level weights and now Kayak must give Nikitas 3lb.

Piper's Son would be hard to beat in the Sonning Novices' Hurdle if he ran as well as he did at Aintree in the spring when fourth to Barton Bank.

However, as that form was well in advance of anything else he has achieved, I now prefer Dragons Den, from Simon Sherwood's in-form yard. Dragons Den showed that he possesses the requisite stamina when making all the running to win at Uttoxeter.

Finally, Better Times Ahead, who has been placed this season over hurdles in the governing bodies of other sports, the Aga asked for the Jockey Club's decision to disqualify Alysa to be overturned.

An earlier attempt by the Aga was foiled in July of last year when the High Court held that the Jockey Club's decisions were not susceptible to judicial review.

The Aga Khan has sought to make the regulatory decisions of the Jockey Club open

to review in the courts. In what is seen as a test case affecting the governing bodies of other sports, the Aga asked for the Jockey Club's decision to disqualify Alysa to be overturned.

At the close of the hearing, which lasted four days, the judges offered no indication when they would give their ruling.

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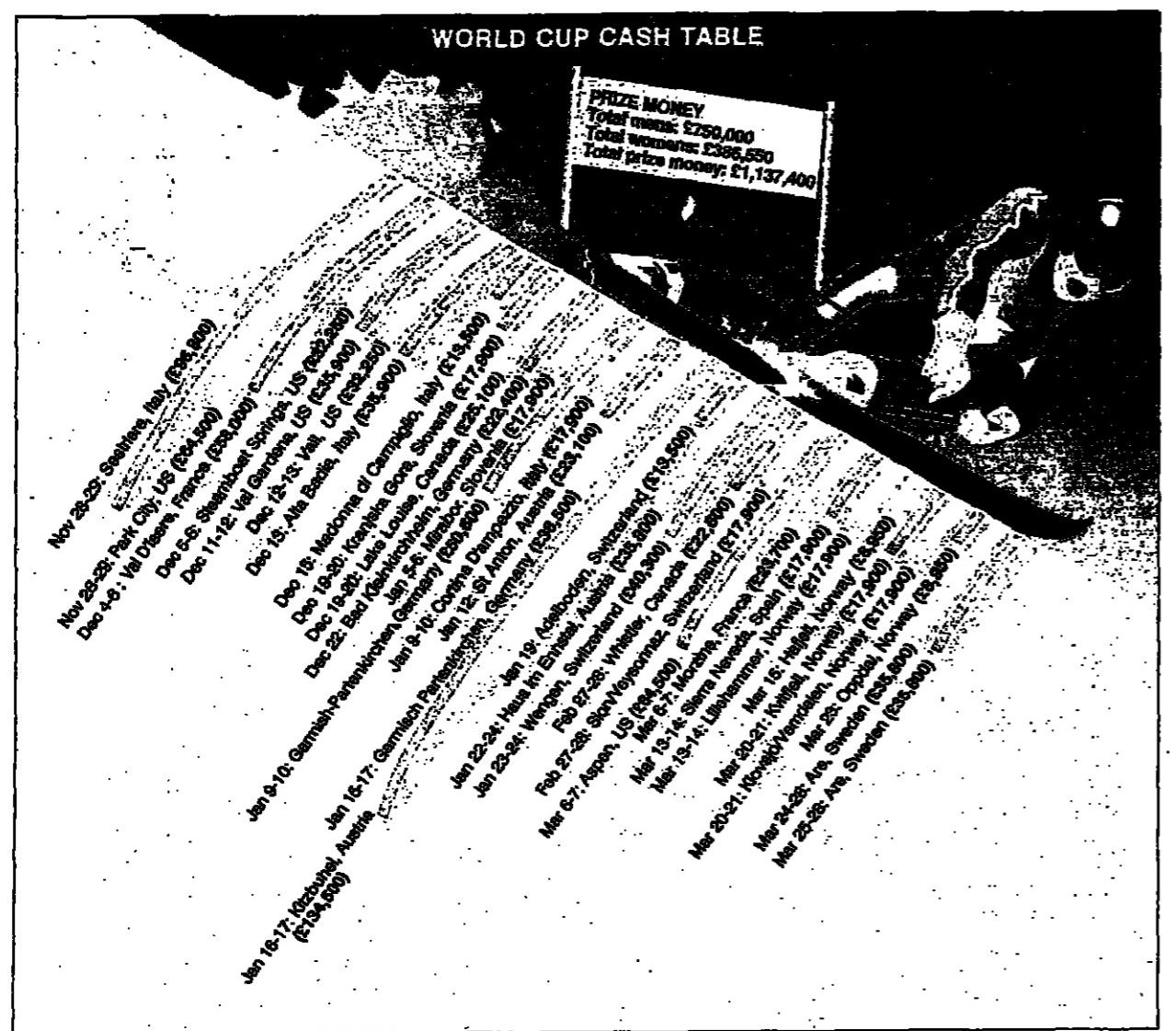
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RUGBY LEAGUE

Wales in need of new blood to launch revival

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

TALK, once more, of Wales becoming an extension of rugby league's northern empire rests on the flimsiest of foundations. The international match against England tonight, which is the first between the sides for eight years, marks a positive step but is largely illusory.

Since England's 28-9 win at Ebb Vale in October 1984, the Bridgend club — formerly Cardiff City — has come and gone and 21 Welsh rugby union notables have taken the financial route up the M6. The flow has now been stemmed but the game remains isolated in the principality.

Despite the rapid demise of nine professional sides in Wales since 1988 — collectively, they lasted just 21 seasons — the Rugby Football League has been making noises about another foray into South Wales on the back of the fixture at the Vale Field, Swansea, this evening.

The prospects are less than rosy. Jonathan Davies said that most Welsh players would prefer to play at home but the chances of a successful club starting up are minuscule, such is the dominance of rugby union in a resurgent climate.

For the time being, the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) has managed to dissuade its leading players from changing codes. Scott Gibbs, the Swansea and Wales centre, was offered extravagant sums by Hull and Wigan earlier this year but he signed up last May to a new WRU welfare programme drawn up by Alan Davies, the Wales coach.

Victory would also firm up a possible tour of New Zealand next summer and further press the Wales claims for inclusion as a separate team in the 1995 World Cup.

England should add to a record of 41 wins in 58 meetings this evening. A marginal superiority in pace among a young back-line contrasts with a substantial difference in strength between the packs.

Wales will be captained by David Young, 24, who won 14 rugby union caps for his country at prop forward and made three appearances for the British Lions in Australia in 1989. After an unsuccessful spell at Leeds, he has revisited his league career under Kevin Tarnat at Salford.

"When Kevin came along, it was great to hear someone encouraging me. I was about at the end of my tether," Young said. "It's nice to come home holding my head a little bit higher."

Although there is a precedent for replaying a match, after a similar incident in a tie between Burton Albion and Kingstonian in 1984-5, Kingstonian may not have a third chance to win the first-round tie. The FA says that it will be looking strictly at how the outcome of the match was influenced. When Blake was

injured Kingstonian were trailing 3-0 and they went on to lose 9-1, with Andy Parr, a midfield player in goal.

An FA spokesman, Mike Wilmore, said: "Primarily, the committee will be purely concerned about the result of the game and how it was affected. If any other matters arise from the meeting they will be referred to other departments of the FA. A decision has to be made soon but there are several factors to be considered. One of them is obviously the question of safety and security at the ground."

Barry Chauveau, the Kingstonian chairman, lodged an appeal with the FA yesterday morning but said: "The FA pre-empted us from the referee's report and what they had seen on television. I will be there with the club

doctor and the club secretary as well as Adrian Blake himself."

When the Burton Albion goalkeeper was felled in the match against Leicester City at Derby County's Basford Ground, his side was drawing 1-1 but went on to lose 6-1. Burton lost the replayed match at Coventry City 1-0. Chauveau said: "I think it's a great embarrassment we were 5-0 down at the time, but who knows what might have happened? The game was finished for us because of one idiot behind the goal. I don't care if we lose 10-1 next time so long as there is another game. I'm just glad that the FA has responded to our appeal and appear to be ready to do something about it."

The FA also said yesterday that it would ask Stan

Flashman, the Barnet chairman, for his version of events before and after the Football League commission at a London hotel on Monday, when he was involved in skirmishes with photographers. Unless Flashman can satisfy the FA, he is likely to face a disreputable charge.

The Football Association of Ireland said yesterday that it had received a first instalment of £300,000 towards a £1.5 million compensation figure agreed with the Football Association over the screening of Premier League matches when League of Ireland games were scheduled.

David Platt, the England midfield player, underwent surgery yesterday to remove cartilage from his right knee. Platt, of Juveniles, will be sidelined for about a month.

Bray reaches semi-finals

Chris Bray, of Great Britain, reached the semi-finals of the George Wimpey British Open real tennis championship at Queen's Club when he defeated Robert Faisey, of Australia, in five sets yesterday.

Bray, the professional at Petworth, now meets Jonathan Howell, the Oratory school professional, who beat the favourite, Lucille Deuchar.

Dentchar and Wayne Davies beat Chris Ronaldson and Mick Dean in the second round of the doubles.

Gröbler accepts job

Rowing: Jürgen Gröbler has accepted the post of chief coach with the Amateur Rowing Association. Gröbler was offered the job over a month ago but has been resolving his contractual obligations with

BOXING

Lewis rejects proposal

LENNOX Lewis, Britain's No. 1 world heavyweight boxing contender, has turned down an \$11.5 million deal to step aside and allow Riddick Bowe, the world champion, to have one voluntary defence before meeting him (Srikumar Sen writes).

The offer, made in New York on Wednesday, was re-

jected by Lewis's negotiating team because Lewis had been given a written undertaking by Bowe that he would defend against him first after winning the world title.

Lewis now expects to be decided World Boxing Council (WBC) champion in January and hopes to make three defences against George Foreman, Tommy Morrison and, last of all, Frank Bruno.

Lewis's manager, Frank Maloney, said yesterday that Bowe's manager, Rock Newman, had given Lewis two options. Either Lewis could have the first challenge if he allowed Bowe to take 90 per cent of the purse, or Lewis could step aside, take \$2.5 million for a bout with an opponent of his choosing and meet Bowe next for \$9 million.

At the end of a three-hour meeting, Maloney made a counter-offer of a 75-25 per

THE TIMES

RACING

Commentary
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Snow business wakes up to world of dashing for cash

The money mountains have finally come into view as the World Cup ski season prepares to open, David Powell reports from Sestriere

The Alpine World Cup skiing season begins tomorrow with the mist which prevented the sport's administrators from seeing the wisdom of prize-money now cleared. For the first time, the money mountains have come into view.

Cash rewards on a scale previously unimaginable are in place. Two years ago, prize-money was forbidden by the International Ski Federation (FIS). Last year, it was a maximum of \$18,000 (£12,400) a race.

The winner's cheques were barely enough to cover a fortnight's competition expenses. But this winter the only restriction is at the minimum end — \$20,000 (£13,950) a race — and, by the season's conclusion four months hence, more than a £1 million will have been won.

Howard Peterson, the United States Ski Federation director, has been the Sir Edmund Hillary of the prize-money expedition. But the explorer's flag is not yet planted at the summit. The biggest winner's cheques will be paid at Kitzbühel, with \$150,000 (£102,000), or Park City, where the women's begins with

\$100,000 (£64,500). This Italian resort trails only Kitzbühel, celebrating its centenary paying \$300,000 (£134,500). The women's Park City prize pot is a piker, after which it is downhill all the way. The next highest money mountain is at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, offering DM95,000 (£38,500). The season's prize-money for women is half the men's.

Tino Giovannini, the Alpine World Cup director, is working on his "global plan for reorganisation". Centralised marketing and sale of television rights by FIS, at present handled by the venue and its national federation, are the key areas.

All of this makes the British skiers' job harder. Last sponsorship has reduced the British Ski Federation's Alpine budget from £280,000 to £190,000 and Mike Jardine, the chief executive, said: "What prize-money means is that teams and individuals, well supported now, will be better supported."

The Austrians and Swiss are preparing to keep work on the international banks. Britain's World Cup skiers are still taking overdrafts.

CRICKET

Umpire's refusal to use TV aid riles Indian team

FROM RICHARD STRETON IN JOHANNESBURG

AN UMPIRING controversy in the second Test match between South Africa and India here yesterday seems certain to bring revised thinking about the use of television replays to settle difficult line decisions. Steve Bucknor, the West Indian umpire, spurning the help of the camera, ruled that Jonny Rhodes had not been run out when replays showed that he failed to make his ground by some six inches.

Bucknor rejected Indian appeals to invoke the third umpire in the pavilion. He was crouched about five yards out of alignment when he trusted to his eyes and gave his verdict. Rhodes had made 28 and was leading South Africa's attempt to recover from an appalling start.

After the opening 75 minutes they were 26 for four, but Rhodes went on to reach 91 before he was run out and South Africa were 226 for seven at the close, with McMillan leading some late resistance.

The Rhodes incident brought precisely the contentious atmosphere which the introduction of television replays was designed to eliminate. South African and Indian officials will now have to overhaul the system. Possible changes include the off-the-field umpire being allowed unilaterally to intervene if a mistake is made. They might decide, too, that the fielding side should have the right to demand that the electronic eye be used. Clive Lloyd, the match referee, agreed that such amendments might be discussed.

Bucknor, who is not allowed to comment, was quoted before the series began that he disapproved of television replays being used. Lloyd said that now the monitor was available, the official would be encouraged to use it.

South Africa were 61 when Rhodes pushed a ball from Kapil Dev towards Srinath at mid-off and went for a single. Srinath's throw hit the stumps. Following their encouraging series against Australia, Sri Lanka will start as strong favourites in the first Test against a badly-weakened New Zealand side at Moratuwa today. Five of the New Zealanders went home following a bomb blast outside their hotel and Justin Vaughan, Mike Owens and Chris Harris will be making their debuts in a match which will be played under tight security.

they progressed to the final in Bari where they lost to Red Star Belgrade on penalties.

Rangers have never scaled such heights and are already behind schedule. They could catch up in a fortnight with a victory over CSKA Moscow, who lost 1-0 in Bruges.

Yet a sense of pessimism lay within a comment by Walter Smith, the Rangers manager. He conceded that he remains "woefully short" of experienced Scottish players.

Two members of the side which finished against Marseilles, McSweeney, 22, and Murray, 19, have yet to make their debuts in the premier division.

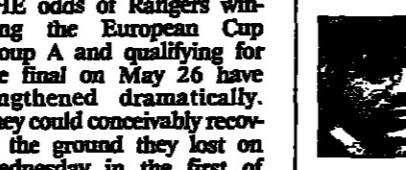
In spite of their crushing dominance in Scotland, the Rangers fabric was shown to be threadbare. When Hateley, Milkhaillenko and Steven (who was evidently less than fit) were chosen as the three permitted foreigners, they had no adequate replacement either for the injured McCoist or for the suspended Ferguson.

Smith accepted that he required all of his best players to be in prime form for the opening fixture. If they had been, the gap in class would still doubtless have been distinguishable. As it was, it appeared to be a yawning chasm.



STUART JONES
Football Commentary

Rangers discover harsh reality



STUART JONES
Football Commentary

comparative lack of skill by overpowering foreign sides.

Chris Waddle, as he watched his former club colleagues on Wednesday night, pointed out that Marseilles were now equipped to cope with the aggression which might once have inhibited them. Aristocrats around the world have recognised the need to insert an iron fist into their velvet gloves.

Like other British clubs, Rangers are discovering that they cannot compete with the combination of the rough and gentle touch. They were taken aback by Marseilles' initial ruggedness, epitomised by the fearsome Boli and the equally robust di Meco, both of whom were cautioned. After being battered, as though by a collection of steam hammers, Rangers were systematically dissected with the intimacy of a doctor conducting an autopsy.

McSweeney, in scoring the first senior goal of a career which began seven years ago, and Hateley brought them

back to life, not only on the night but also in the tournament itself.

On the evidence of last season, when the league format was introduced, the winners of each group will not be beaten more than once. They are also unlikely to drop any points in their three home games. Marseilles are on course to repeat their feat of last year.

Then, under the old system,

they could catch up in a fortnight with a victory over CSKA Moscow, who lost 1-0 in Bruges.

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BBC1

- 6.00 *Ceefax* (56911)
6.30 *Broadsheet* begins with *Business Breakfast* until 6.55 when Laure Mayes and Tanya Sillem present news and topical reports with regional business, sport, weather, regional news and travel bulletins (6073579).
9.05 *Kilroy*. Robert Kilroy-Silk chairs a studio discussion on a topical subject (2077198). 9.45 *Ross King*. Game show. Today's guest is comedian Ted Rogers (5407737).
10.00 *News*, regional news and weather (7396244). 10.05 *Playdays*. For the very young (r) (s) (5699553).
10.30 *Good Morning*... with Anne and Nick. *Weekday* magazine presented by Anne Diamond and Nick Owen. Today's edition includes a celebrity leisure guide, a romantic story, weekend shopping ideas and an advice phone-in (s). With *News* (*Ceefax*) and weather at 11.00 and 12.00 (4214724).
12.15 *Pebble Mill*. Music and entertainment presented by Alan Titchmarsh (5685533). 12.25 *Regional News* and weather (7396244).
1.00 *One O'Clock News* with Philip Hayton. (*Ceefax*) Weather (56089).
1.30 *Neighbours*. (*Ceefax*) (s) (4216724). 1.50 *Eldorado* (r). (*Ceefax*) (s) (7370484).
2.20 *Gong for Gold*. The eloquent Henry Kelly with another round of the general knowledge quiz with European contestants (s) (2068718). 2.45 *The Flying Doctors*. Undermanning medical drama set in the Australian outback (5339080).
3.30 *Droopy Dog* B&W Cartoons (3466027). 3.45 *Bump!* (r) (2170843). 3.55 *Christopher Crocodile*. Adventure (314756). 3.55 *Superbirds*. Nicols Davies and Philip Haworth continue their exploration of the human body (3435534). 4.10 *Chippendales Go to the Movies* (s) (125189). 4.35 *Record Breakers* presented by Roy Castle and Christopher Biggins. Includes a guest appearance by Tom Jones. (*Ceefax*) (s) (5262008).
5.00 *Newsworld* (2403739). 5.05 *Sybaritic Grove*. Drama serial set in a North East youth centre. (*Ceefax*) (s) (5650629).
5.35 *Neighbours* (r). (*Ceefax*) (s) (475716). Northern Ireland: *Inside Ulster*.
6.00 *Six O'Clock News* with Peter Stansfield and Moira Sturz. (*Ceefax*) Weather (379).
6.30 *Regional News Magazines* (331). Northern Ireland: *Neighbours* 7.00 *Eldorado* (*Ceefax*) (s) (7027).
7.30 *Don't Wait Up*. Genial comedy series by George Layton starring Nigel Havers and Tony Britton as father and son medics. Tom is fearful of attending a family party and bumping into his former wife (Jane Horrocks), who has just emerged from the break-up of her seven-day second marriage. (*Ceefax*) (s) (843). Northern Ireland: *Sportscene*.
8.00 *Challenge Anniela*. In the last of the series the hyperactive Miss Rice once again attempts the impossible — to equip a medical centre, provide electricity and drill a bore hole at a refugee camp in Malawi, all in a matter of days. (*Ceefax*) (s) (7244).
9.00 *Nine O'Clock News* with Michael Buerk. (*Ceefax*) Regional news and weather (1195).



Police enquiries: Georges Pearson, Redmond (9.30pm)

- 9.30 *Between the Lines*. Tough police drama starring Neil Pearson, this week investigating a police superintendent caught kerb-crawling in King's Cross, and discovering murder, blackmail, pornography and perhaps police corruption at the highest level. With Tom Georgeson and Stephen Redmond. (*Ceefax*) (s) (719737).
10.20 *Terry Wogan's Friday Night*. The guests include American comic actor Leslie Nielsen, comedian Arthur Smith, Kylie Minogue and publisher Gloria Steinham. Music is provided by Shef (s) (565088). Northern Ireland: *Anderson on the Box*.
11.00 *Snooker*. The Royal Liver Assurance UK championship (98466). Northern Ireland: 11.10 *Terry Wogan* 11.50 *Cagney and Lacey*.
12.00 *Film: The Lost Command* (1966) starring Anthony Quinn, Alain Delon and George Segal. Crisis action drama set in Algeria during the country's struggle for independence from France. Directed by Mark Robson (22381022). Northern Ireland: 12.35am-1.35 *Snooker*. 2.05am *Weather* (5334138).

VARIATIONS

- (432008) 10.40 Central Weekend (2041534). 12.10 Film: *The Smiling Roomer* 1.50 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 2.45 *The Hit Man and Her* (441374). 4.45-5.30 *Central Jobbing* (2041482).

- GRANADA**
As London except: 1.15 *A County Practice* (473331). 1.45 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 2.45 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 3.15 *Night Beat* (291157). 4.15-5.30 *Blonde's Big Deal* (6102916).

TV5

- As London except: 1.45 *Challenge of the Seas* (472602). 2.15-3.10 *Donahue* (5222465). 3.20-4.00 *The Young Doctor* (5222465). 4.15-5.30 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 5.35 *Leisure* (5224108). 6.00 *Lockdown* (447) 6.30-7.00 *Take the High Road* (517). 10.40 *The Law and Harry McGee* (74785). 11.35 *The Ga* (705643). 12.35 *Frank Sidebottom's Fancast*. 13.15 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 14.30 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 15.15-16.05 *Pop Prof* (716657).

BORDER

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CENTRAL

- As London except: 1.15 *A County Practice* (473331). 1.45 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 2.45 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 3.15 *Leisure* (5224108). 4.15-5.30 *Donahue* (5222465). 5.35 *Leisure* (5224108). 6.00 *Lockdown* (447) 6.30-7.00 *Take the High Road* (517). 10.40 *The Law and Harry McGee* (74785). 11.35 *The Ga* (705643). 12.35 *Frank Sidebottom's Fancast*. 13.15 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 14.30 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 15.15-16.05 *Pop Prof* (716657).

HTV WEST

- As London except: 1.45-2.15 *Love At First Sight* (472902). 2.20-3.30 *A County Practice* (473331). 5.15-5.40 *Home and Away* (5644028). 6.00 *HTV News* (447) 6.30-7.00 *Sportspower* (517). 10.40 *The Big Five* (517). 11.30 *Home and Her Family* (2041009). 12.35 *Blonde's Big Deal* (6102916).

HTV WALES

- As HTV West except: 6.00pm *Wales at Six* 6.30-7.00 *Stopwatch*.

TSW

- As London except: 2.15 *Discovering*

BBC2

- 8.00 *Breastfeeding* (4150621). 9.00 *Westminster* (5411176). 9.30 *Daytime on Two*. Educational Programmes 9.30 News and weather followed by *Words and Pictures* (r) (s) (5242106). 10.15 *Sport on Friday* introduced by Helen Rollason. Snooker semi-final action in the Royal Liver Assurance UK championship; Football, a preview of tomorrow's game at Twickenham between the Barbarians and world champions France; Tennis (Ceefax) and weather at 3.00 and 3.45 (2227973). 4.30 *Behind the Headlines*. *Stevens* (Perera) is joined by American television soap expert Barbara Bower to discuss the BBC's *El Dorado* (756). 5.00 *Delta Smith's Christmas*. The cook prepares home-made mincemeat and apple, nut and mincemeat studded Alice King suggests red wine to accompany game dishes (r) (505). 5.30 *Top Gear*. Includes road tests of the Escort Cosworth and the Vauxhall Calibra turbo; and a review of the Lombard RAC racing (r) (s) (469). 5.45 *Swing*. Classic 1930s puppet adventure series (r) (221203). 6.25 *The Man From UNCLE*. Spies agent series starring Robert Vaughn and David McCallum. This week, after Napoleon Solo narrowly escapes death from an object falling from the sky, the UNCLE agents find themselves pitted against the evil Emory Partridge (George Sanders) (r). (*Ceefax*) (265992). 7.15 *Doctor Who*. Episode two of the five part adventure starring Jon Pertwee as the time-travelling scientist (r) (155176). 7.40 *What the Papers Say*. John Sweeney of *The Observer* looks at how the Press has covered the week's news (561595). 8.00 *Public Eye: Violent Treatment*. Phil Parry investigates domestic violence and whether locking up the offender will change their attitude towards their partner (1089). 8.30 *Living Colour*. The second of five programmes looking at how gardens grow, presented by Geoff Hamilton. (*Ceefax*) (3624). 9.00 *The Face of Tutankhamun*. Part two of the series tracing how archaeologist Howard Carter discovered the world's richest tomb (767688).



Art treasures in Cambridge: Sister Wendy Beckett (9.30pm)

- 9.30 *Sister Wendy's Odyssey*. Sister Wendy Beckett continues her hunt for Britain's art treasures and visits Cambridge where among the paintings she discovers is Titian's dramatic portrayal of rape. (*Ceefax*) (50147). 10.00 *Have I Got News For You*. Topical comedy quiz hosted by Angus Deayton. This week Ian Hislop and Paul Merton are joined by Chris Tarrant and actress Meera Syal (s) (17737). 10.15 *Weather* (362008). 11.20 *Film: Two Men in Manhattan* (1958, b/w). The French Film Classics season continues with a homage to Hollywood gangster movies written, starring and directed by Jean-Pierre Melville. When a French delegate to the UN disappears a journalist and a photographer go in search for him. In English and French with English subtitles (561737).

- 12.45pm *Behind the Headlines*. A repeat of the programme shown at 4.30pm (2920799). Ends at 1.15

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RUGBY UNION 36

AUSTRALIA AT
FULL STRENGTH
FOR BARBARIANS

SPORT

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27 1992

THE TIMES SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 1992

SKIING 38

CHASE IS ON
FOR WORLD
CUP RICHES

Leeds make a surprise decision to sell their popular French international to Manchester United

Ferguson swoops swiftly to capture Cantona

By IAN ROSS

ERIC Cantona's brief but memorable stay at Leeds United ended abruptly yesterday with a hastily arranged and unexpected transfer to Manchester United.

The French international, who helped Leeds win the first division championship last season, made the short journey from Elland Road to Old Trafford yesterday morning and emerged with a three-year contract following talks with Alex Ferguson, the United manager, and Martin Edwards, the club chairman.

If Cantona, 26, passes a medical this morning and can be registered with the Football League before noon, he is likely to make his debut in the Premier League fixture against Arsenal at Highbury tomorrow.

Cantona's move was arranged late on Wednesday

when Ferguson, perhaps more in hope than expectation, contacted Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds manager, to enquire about him.

Ferguson later admitted to being surprised to find Cantona was available but he acted with speed. He promptly asked for and received permission from his board of directors for the fee — thought to be £1.2 million — and then opened negotiations with the player.

The deal comes just one week after Ferguson's second attempt to sign David Hirst, the Sheffield Wednesday and England forward, had ended in failure. Ferguson, seeking a goalscorer of proven ability to help sustain United's challenge for a first championship success in more than two decades, had offered £3.5 million for Hirst only to be denied permission to approach him.

Cantona, a £900,000 buy

TRANSFER DETAILS

Eric Cantona
Born Marseille, May 1965
CLUB RECORD: Auxerre, Marseille (on loan); Nimes £1.1m, (1989); Sheffield Wednesday (trial, January 1992); Leeds United £900,000, February 1992; Manchester United (£1.2m, November 1992).

GOALSCORING: Cantona scored 14

goals in his career with Leeds.
FERGUSON'S £1M SIGNINGS: M. Hughes (Barcelona, £1.6m); Webb (Nottingham Forest, £1.5m); P. Jones (Middlesbrough, £2.5m); D. Wallace (Hull United, £2m); P. Parker (QPR, £2m) and D. Dublin (Cambridge, £1.1m); E. Cantona (Leeds United, £1.2m).

from Nimes in February, has scored 11 goals in 19 matches this season, and was always popular with the Elland Road crowd. It was clear, however, that his working relationship with Wilkinson was placed under considerable strain after his omission from the side that beat Arsenal 3-0 on Saturday.

At the time, the official reason for Cantona's absence was given as "injury problems" but it is now known that he had declared himself fit and available before kick-off.

Ferguson was delighted to

complete the signing. "This deal came out of the blue," he said. "I was talking to Howard and I popped the question. It all went very quickly from there."

"He is the goalscorer we have been looking for. He is a very exciting footballer; the type Manchester United fans will love. He is one of the best entertainers in the country."

Cantona arrived in English football in late January when he was invited for trials at Sheffield Wednesday only a few weeks after he had publicly announced his retirement from the game.

After scoring three goals in the Charity Shield win over Liverpool at Wembley in August, Cantona finally laid claim to a place in the Yorkshire club's first team and scored a hat-trick in the 5-0 defeat of Tottenham Hotspur at Elland Road.

After training with Wednesday's senior squad for four

days, Cantona walked out of Hillsborough. Just 24 hours later, Wilkinson announced that he had agreed to take Cantona on loan until the end of the season.

While he was unable to command a regular first-team place at Leeds, he made a significant contribution — as a frequently introduced substitute — in Leeds' run-in to the league championship.

Their run brought the title to Elland Road for the first time since 1973-4 and denied Manchester United their first championship since 1967.

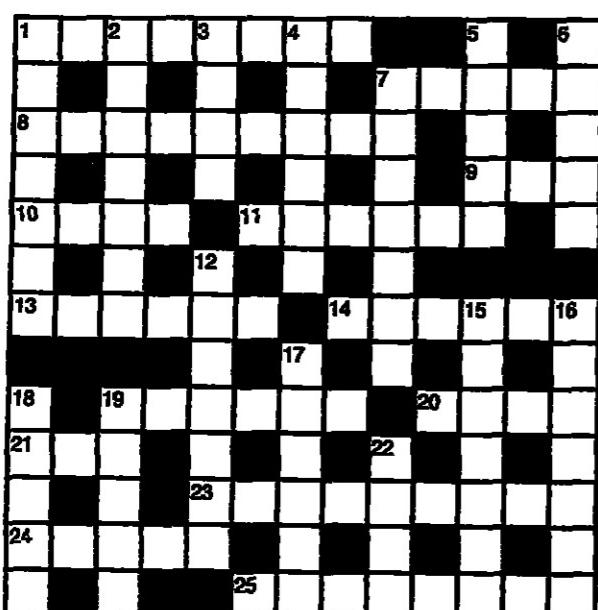
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Controversial figure: Cantona felt disillusioned

FA Cup enquiry, page 38

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2956



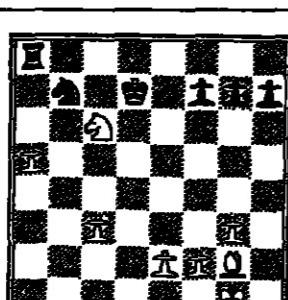
SOLUTIONS TO NO 2955

ACROSS: 7 Camp 8 Academic 9 Sparks 10 Dollar 11 Hind 12 Biennial 15 Pediment 17 Raft 18 Graves 21 Recant 22 Signpost 23 Path
DOWN: 1 Sapiente 2 Spared 3 Passable 4 Bard 5 Reflex 6 Lira 13 Saurian 14 Affinity 16 Invent 17 Recipe 19 Ruin 20 Slow

WINNING MOVE

By RAYMOND KNEENE, Chess Correspondent

This position is from the game Wells — Priethoda, Cappelle-la-Grande 1992. White is the exchange (rook for bishop or knight) down, but has two pawns and a dangerous-looking lineup on the h1-a8 diagonal. How did he make the most of this?



Solution on page 36

CROSSWORD ENTHUSIASTS: For mail order details of all Times Crossword Books and The Times Computer Crossword software for beginners or experts, (runs on most PCs), telephone Atom Ltd on 081 852 4575 (24 hours) or call CDS Doncaster on 0302 890 000. Postage free until Christmas (applies UK only).

WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

ADEEM
a. To guess wrong
b. A voter in Shetland
c. To revoke a legacy

BUNCO
a. A swindle
b. Nonsense, rubbish
c. A bun company or bakery

LUES
a. White violets
b. Lavatories
c. Syphilis

TALLITH
a. An Indian language and caste
b. A shawl
c. Pretty tall with a lisp

Answers on page 36

British sailor is found drowned

By KEITH WHEATLEY

NIGEL Burgess, one of two British yachtsmen participating in the Vendée Globe solo round-the-world race, has been drowned. French naval divers found his body 50 miles west of Cape Finisterre, off northern Spain, yesterday.

An electronic beacon strapped to the body led search helicopters to Burgess. He was wearing a survival suit, which should have kept the wearer alive through up to 20 hours immersion. However, reports from the scene spoke of Burgess having received a massive blow to the head — probably from the yacht's boom.

Distress signals were broadcast from the 60ft monohull, Nigel Burgess Yachtbrokers — named after his Monaco-based company — late on Wednesday. The weather was atrocious, with 55mph winds and a huge swell.

Four other competitors had suffered serious damage since the start of the race at midday on Sunday. Mike Plant, of the United States, is missing, believed drowned, after his yacht, Coyote, capsized on his way for the race start.

José Iglesias, of Spain, aboard Euskadi Europe '93, was first to reach the location of the Burgess mayday. He found the yacht badly damaged forward of the mast and flooded but still afloat. A life raft was floating nearby. It was not until noon yesterday that helicopters from the French navy ship, Monge, found the floating body, with a lifejacket on, some miles from the yacht.

Burgess, 49, who has a wife and two teenage children, was a highly experienced sailor. He had raced across the Atlantic three times single-handed, the first in 1968 in his own 28ft sloop, and possessed a merchant navy master's ticket. It is unthinkable that Burgess would simply leap into the sea while his yacht was sailable.

The most credible explanation is that the boom smashed into him, knocking him overboard while he was trying to cope with the damage.

After ten years as a professional deck officer, Burgess was aware of all the arguments against single-handed racing. "It's hypocritical of me to even be doing this because I know all the reasons why solo racing is dangerous," he said before competing in the



Nigel Burgess aboard his yacht before starting the Globe race on Sunday

single-handed transatlantic race this summer.

His motivations were two-fold. First, Burgess said it was always difficult to find crew with enough competence, motivation and spare time to match his own. Second, he loved sailing fast and the advanced water-ballasted design of the yachts in the Vendée Globe made them the quickest monohulls around.

His yacht, under its original name, Charente Maritime TBS, competed in the first Vendée Globe three years ago

and finished fifth. Burgess saw the start of that race from the shores of Les Sables d'Olonne and was determined to compete in the event next time around.

He paid about £250,000 for

the 60ft yacht and spent about

another £100,000 on preparing

her for the event, which he

saw as the ultimate challenge

in single-handed racing.

"A boat of this size and type

is always going so fast that

you're continually sailing close

to the edge," Burgess said

after a week tuning the yacht

off Plymouth.

Burgess was taking close to a year away from the brokerage — unpaid — to fulfil this ambition. "This is like another job. It's something you can't play at. It needs to be done full-time and with professionalism," he had said.

Organisers of the race in Paris were putting on a brave face last night. One death and one presumed, as well as six boats turning back for repairs out of a total of 14 is grim news after just a week of racing. But a senior official,

Philippe Jeantot, said: "There is no question of calling it off."

Desert Orchid able to take a walk as greetings flood in

By MICHAEL SEELEY

DESERT Orchid, the nation's best-loved racehorse, yesterday became the nation's best-guarded patient as he stood in intensive care at Newmarket, recovering from Wednesday's operation for a twisted gut.

A tight security net was drawn around the surgical unit of Rossdale & Partners situated between the High Street and St Mary's Church.

Flowers, chocolates and get-well cards had flooded in throughout the day.

"It's extraordinary," Tim Green, one of the two veterinary surgeons who performed the operation on the 13-year-old gelding, said. "He was well enough to take a short walk this morning. He was allowed to have a mouthful of grass to stimulate his appetite and keep up his interest in life."

The grey's digestive system is starting to work again. He is passing droppings well, but his small intestine is not yet functioning properly.

Green added: "That's one problem and the other concerns the toxins that have built up."

Colic in horses takes several forms, the most severe being a twisted gut. As the gut twists, the blood supply is cut off, causing a build-up of bacterial poison, dead tissue and intestinal gas. Surgery is the only remedy and there is only a one-in-four chance of recovery.

Burridge, who spent yesterday keeping an anxious vigil, said: "We've been blessed with extreme good fortune to have this remarkable horse, who has been so healthy throughout his career. We're all now praying that he'll survive this battle as he survived so many in the past."

About ten feet of the 70-80ft of small intestine have been

Dwyer check, page 37

Parrott has peaked at the perfect time

JOHN Parrott continued his untroubled progress towards a successful defence of the Royal Liver Assurance United Kingdom snooker championship with a 9-3 quarter-final victory over Joe Swail in Preston yesterday (Phil Yates writes).

He had combined water-tight safety with clinical break-building while moving to a 6-2 lead on Wednesday and when play resumed, Swail found it impossible to prevent his opponent from maintaining this high quality of play.

A break of 35 early in the ninth frame proved sufficient for Parrott to increase his lead before Swail, who won the Irish professional championship in May, kept his slim hopes alive with a decisive clearance to pink for 7-3.

Parrott, after winning two tournaments already this sea-

son and reaching the final of another, is playing with more authority than ever before and compiled breaks of 54, 61 and 76 in the following two frames to complete an emphatic success.

"I don't think there is much room for improvement in my game," Parrott said. "The penny has really dropped with me when it comes to winning. I am so used to being involved at top level now that I know what is required."

Stephen Hendry, attempting to become UK champion for the third time since 1989, went into the concluding session of his quarter-final level with Alan McManus at 4-4, after winning two frames on the black with substantial clearances.

Hendry, after winning two tournaments already this sea-

son, had to settle for a draw with McManus (5-5),

with Immense RELIEF, Sir Charles found THE TAYLOR'S Completely UNAFFECTED...

1992
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BEST taken Seriously